

LATYMER



remembered



School Prefects 1932 - 33

Memories of Latymer School 1882 - 1945

Cover picture

Back row first from left to right:

*Bernard Collop, Ronald Aylward, George Davies, Charles Spencer, Charlie Oades, Bernard Barnes, Sutton,
Harry Crooks, Eva Anthony, Unknown, Minnie Cox, Joyce Norman, Unknown, Gladys Cottrell, Jean Ridley,
Enid Gibbs, VSE Davies - Headmaster, Leonard Jones, Unknown, Jack Long.*

LATYMER

remembered



*Recollections of the pupils and staff
at the Latymer School, Edmonton
1882-1945*

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LATYMER

16 m e m b e r s



Recollections of the people and staff
in the Latymer School, Edmonton
1883-1942

Published by the Latymer School, Edmonton
1942

Foreword

Just as no two individuals are the same, so schools each have their own characteristics. When I attended for preliminary interview at Latymer I expected, having been impressed by the school shield and date of foundation that accompanied an imposingly worded advertisement, that I was an outsider storming the bastions of privilege in the State sector. It did not take long for Latymer to show its true face – buildings of sound construction but of no great antiquity and only occasional elegance, and people – pupils, teachers, parents and governors of worth and commitment whose voices tend to the accents of North London rather than those of the Public Schools. What a relief! I immediately felt at home and was subsequently interviewed and appointed by Governors, many of whom were indistinguishable from my aunts and uncles, small business people in Enfield Wash. During my first years at Latymer I was impressed by the strength of Latymer traditions, the Latymer spirit and the Latymer family feeling of which I now feel truly a part, after a mere twelve years. Latymer tradition has very little to do with pomp and ceremony – rather it includes a dislike of anything that smacks of self importance. It is both amusing and moving to read of the cheer that greeted Mr & Mrs Ashworth as they mounted the stage after the silent deference afforded to the visiting royalty and dignitaries in 1928.

Latymer tradition expresses itself in the roles Latymerians accept as second nature, in the strength of the House system and all the activity it engenders – a strength rare today in state schools. The equality of girls and boys – much sought after in these days of equal opportunities is of long-standing at Latymer. The one most ritualised Latymer occasion is

the Remembrance Service which holds meaning for all as we honour Latymerians who fought and in all too many cases died in the world wars.

This collection of memories of Latymer from 1882 to 1945 was lovingly assembled by Andrew Granath from conversations recorded wherever Latymerians with long memories can be found from Bosham on the South Coast to the Lake District. These memories explain much of the Latymer spirit of aspiration, endeavour and achievement without self-importance and which singularly dislikes arrogance and pretension. As we see from Andrew Granath's brief historical introduction, Latymer always was a Grammar School in a working class area. Its pupils now come from a wide arc of North London and are certainly not drawn mainly from the much reduced 'working class'; but the purposeful bustle of Latymer corridors today, its happily wide social and racial mix is wholly in tune with the memories gathered here.

This volume will of course be of interest to those who remember the pre-war years. For most of us its fascination lies in showing how much our predecessors were like us and how different were the circumstances in which they lived. Above all it shows us much of the origins of the Latymer family of which we are part, and validates what we are and what we strive to be.

G.T. Mills
Headmaster, 1983-

Acknowledgements

Those of you who are familiar with Joe Morris's history of Latymer will recognise that I have made extensive use of his researches, particularly in the historical introduction, although it is now clear that his work is in need of bringing up to date.

Particular acknowledgement should be made of Mrs Edith Knight whose memory of Latymer goes back to the building of the Haselbury Road school in 1910 and who has been formally connected with Latymer for nearly 80 years as a pupil and as the wife of a former deputy headmaster. Her knowledge of and passion for all things Latymer has been invaluable. Mention should also be made of Dr Victor Jolly who at the time of writing is the oldest of all known Old Latymerians although I would be happy to hear from anyone able to correct me on this matter. May Bennett has been a source of sound advice in this enterprise as well as being a pillar of strength to many Old Latymerians.

Particular mention should also be made of Dick Hibberd and Jack Embleton who more than 20 years ago had the prescience to interview their stepfather and father respectively, both alumni of the Old Latymer in Church Street, whose memories start this collection. I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to all of those connected with Latymer who allowed me to ransack their memories of events which in some cases took place more than 80 years ago. Furthermore I have been constantly impressed by the clarity of recall that all the interviewees demonstrated and the obvious affection that they retain for their school days. It has not been my job to rectify any minor lapses of memory and in a few cases of minor detail there are some contradictions that I have left unresolved.

Andrew Granath

Introduction

History is rarely straightforward or what we expect it to be. The story of Latymer in its early years exhibits a curious blend of avarice, ambition, corruption, incompetence, high-mindedness, nepotism, selflessness, betrayal and devotion. Edward Latymer may have been a Christian gentleman and benefactor but he was also a land speculator with an eye for profit in this world, and good works to ease his passage into the next. It is doubtful if he could have envisaged the enormous benefits that his bequest was to have or that 400 years later his foresight would be quite so publicly acknowledged by such a wide variety of people, not only those connected with Edmonton Latymer but also those who have attended Latymer Upper¹ and Godolphin and Latymer² in Hammersmith. The whig view of history as a seamless line of continuous progression hardly applies here. Latymer's fortunes have veered from being the fount of cosy sinecures to near dissolution and in this century to its emergence as an "Eton of the state sector." Despite the vicissitudes of human nature and changing political circumstances Latymer has emerged triumphant not just as a high flier in the examination league tables but also as an institution that commands a fierce loyalty and a sense of belonging. This is the result not only of the devotion of a series of talented individuals but also because of the circumstances of educational change over the past 30 years. The introduction of comprehensive education has served to enhance Latymer's position by making it one of the very few grammar schools in North London. This in turn has increased its attractiveness to those parents who aspire for the future of their children.

I have been most struck by the tremendous impression that the first headmaster of Latymer in Haselbury Road, Richard Ashworth, had on a host of young lives. He was a dynamic influence who had the ability to convince every pupil who was at the school in those early days that he knew and cared for them individually. As a result he was held in awe by his charges as a figure who commanded respect rather than fear and

to whom they could turn if in need of advice. Comments ranged from 'I loved that man' to 'It was the proudest day of my life when I was able to go back to school and tell Dickie that I had been awarded my doctorate.' Yet the interviewees were unanimous that this was only possible because for most of the time when 'Dickie' was headmaster the school had about 300 pupils, all known to him personally. It is ironic that he initiated the major building programme that led to the construction of the North Block in 1926 and then 2 years later the building of the Great Hall and another 36 classrooms and laboratories that transformed the school beyond all recognition and would have greatly weakened the links of intimacy and familiarity that bound Richard Ashworth to his 'Latymer family'. The responsibility for managing this much larger school fell upon Victor Davies who undoubtedly suffered from comparisons with his illustrious and much loved predecessor and had the misfortune to be seen as a remote and somewhat unapproachable figure who tended to lock himself away in his office to wrestle with the administrative details involved in the running of a large school. It should not be overlooked however that in his 29 years as headmaster Victor Davies successfully saw Latymer transformed into the largest grammar school in North London as well as steering the school with a deft hand through the very difficult years of the Second World War and the problems involved in the evacuation of pupils to safer areas.

This volume ends in 1945 mainly because the war is a natural watershed and to do full justice to pupils and staff at Latymer since 1945 would require more space than is at my disposal. In addition, an important change in the status of the school resulted from the 1944 Butler Education Act which abolished the payment of fees in all state schools and gave a choice of future status to all schools, other than those county schools wholly maintained by the local education authority. They could become Direct Grant, that is directly funded by the Ministry of

Education provided they accepted 25% of their pupils on the nomination of the local council. They could become Voluntary Aided, whereby the governors retained some responsibility for maintaining the buildings and appointed the headmaster and staff. The third choice was that they could apply for Voluntary Controlled status which involved the loss of financial independence but allowed more management control than a county school. Latymer Upper in Hammersmith, which shared the same benefactor as Edmonton Latymer, chose to become a Direct Grant school but the Edmonton Governors, worried about the

financial viability of recreating a fee paying school in a working class area of London, wisely chose to apply for Voluntary Aided Status. This was granted in 1955 and 4 years later in 1959 Middlesex County Council, in controversial circumstances, handed back responsibility for the Latymer Foundation assets, so cravenly given up in 1910, to the Governors, who once again became the trustees of Edward Latymer's bequest. This however is to trespass too far into the territory reserved for a possible second volume.

NOTES

1. The bequest that led to the founding of Latymer Upper in Hammersmith was part of the same will that Edward Latymer made in 1624 establishing a school in Edmonton. For more than 250 years the school endured a peripatetic existence occupying a series of buildings in the Hammersmith and Fulham area. In 1879 it became a public elementary school for boys under the terms of the 1870 Education Act and was officially designated Latymer Lower School. In 1889 the Charity Commissioners gave permission for the Trustees to build a new school on the present King Street site and this was completed in 1893. In 1902 it became an aided school under the control of the London County Council but in 1945 became a direct grant grammar school with membership of the Headmasters' Conference. In 1971, with the abolition of direct grant status, Latymer Upper chose to become fully independent although today, with a very high proportion of its pupils having their fees paid through the Assisted Places Scheme, it is still a school dependent on state funding.

2. The opening of the Godolphin and Latymer Girls' school in 1906 was the realisation of a long term commitment on the part of the Hammersmith Latymer Trustees to fund a girls' school. In 1900 the Godolphin school for Boys in Hammersmith closed as a result of competition from St Pauls and Latymer Upper. As a result the Latymer Foundation gave £8000 for the conversion of the building into a school for girls and in addition provided £500 annually towards the upkeep of the school. In 1944 Latymer and Godolphin became an aided school under the control of the London County Council but in 1977 reverted to independent status rather than submit to the Inner London Education Authority's plan for it to become part of a split site comprehensive school.

A brief history of Latymer

Although Latymer may be just 30 years short of its 400th anniversary, the present building has only been on the Haselbury Road site since 1910 and a distinct school as opposed to a charitable foundation has only existed since 1811.

The origins of the Foundation lie in the bequest that Edward Latymer made in 1624 that the trustees of his property should provide eight poor boys aged between seven and twelve, living in the town of Edmonton, with a doublet, a pair of breeches, a shirt, a pair of woollen stockings and a pair of shoes. These were to be provided on November 1st of each year and the gift was to be repeated on Ascension Day but this time the breeches were to be made of "coarse canvas lined". The recipients of this charity were to be known as "Latymer's Poor Alms Boys" and were to wear on their left sleeve a red cloth cross. In addition the trustees were to provide the boys with elementary schooling until they reached the age of 13. Edward Latymer also laid upon the trustees the instruction that the provisions of his will should be carried out "unto the end of the world."

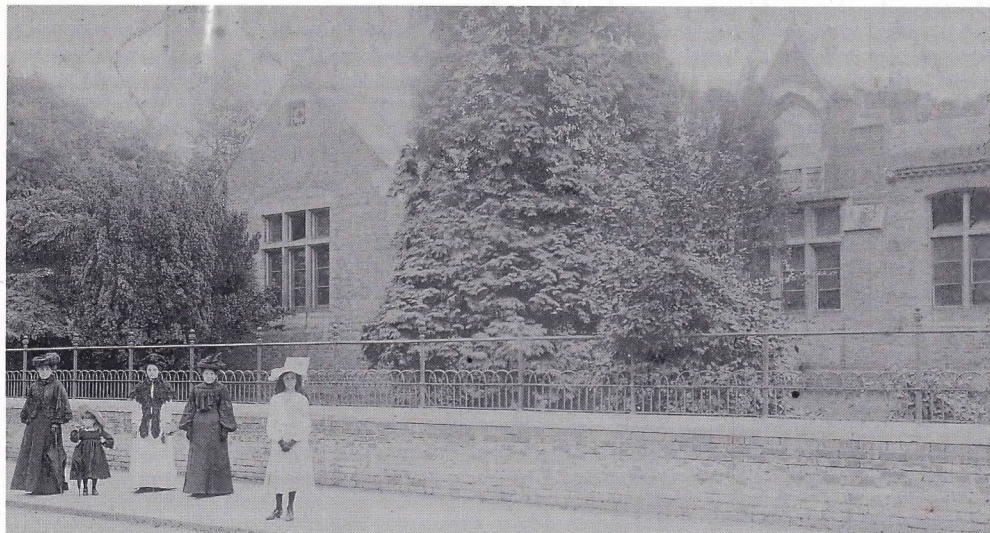
During the course of the next century a number of other charitable bequests were made whose fate was to be amalgamated with the Latymer bequest. In 1662 John Wild of Edmonton left certain properties to trustees out of which the schoolmaster was to receive £4 per annum for teaching the sons of four poor men of the parish and £4 for the maintenance of a poor scholar at Cambridge. Seventeen years later in 1679 Thomas Styles of Edmonton left £20 per annum for "teaching twenty poor boys of the age of five to seventeen the grammar and Latin tongue." It is not known who the recipients of these bequests were or where they were taught. By 1739 the Trustees of the Latymer charity had accumulated a surplus and with it purchased a schoolhouse with grounds and a workhouse. The site of this original Latymer school is not known. Up to the late 18th century it was the practice for the

Vicar of All Saints Church to be the Headmaster of the school who then gave the work of teaching the boys to an usher for a significantly smaller sum than he was paid by the Trustees. This practice ended in 1781 when John Adams was appointed Headmaster, the first of a dynasty who were to control Latymer for the next 80 years, until the appointment of Dr Dolbe. In 1811 Ann Wyatt, a widow of Mile End Road requested £700 to build a new school on Church Street next to All Saints Church. Although by appearances a woman of little wealth, through a lifetime of thrift she had accumulated a considerable fortune and was persuaded by the Vicar of All Saints to donate her money to benefit the poor of Edmonton. The interview at which the Reverend Dawson persuaded Ann Wyatt to bequeath her savings to build a school house has become part of Latymer legend. Above the door of the building that stood on Church Street for 100 years was a stone bearing the inscription:

This School room was built in pursuance of the will of Mrs Ann Wyatt, widow, who, to promote the glory of God, and the good of poor children, caused it to be erected at the expense of her estate.

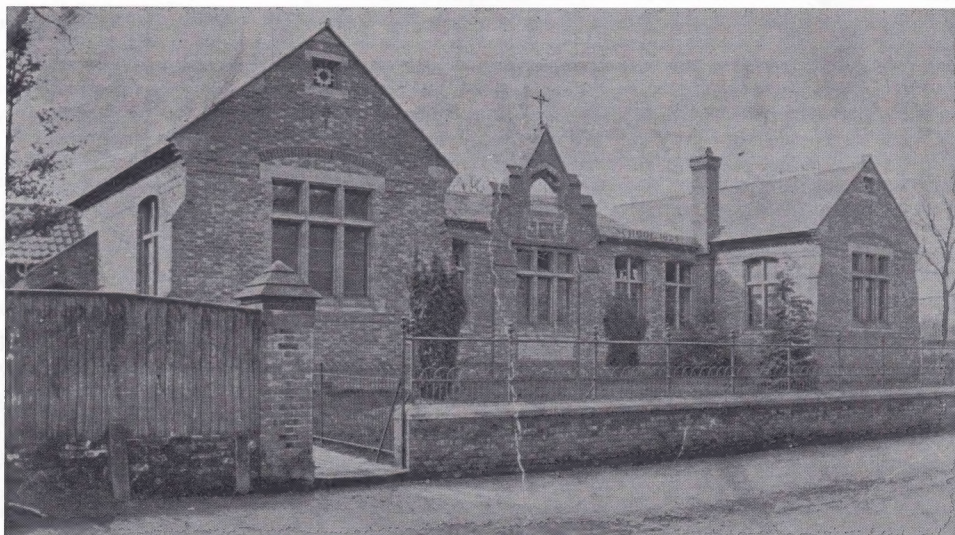
In 1828 the third and last of the Adams dynasty was appointed Headmaster of Latymer, a position that had not only become a family chattel but is also misleading in that there was only one teacher in the school. For what had become little more than a sinecure Charles Henry Adams was paid the generous sum of £162 per annum. It may be noted that his contemporary, Canon James Tate, the Vicar of All Saints, was paid the princely sum of £1641 per annum. This reflects the malaise affecting the unreformed Church of England in the early 19th century rather than any underpayment of Charles Adams. It is clear from inspectors' reports that by the 1850s the standards prevailing at the school were a cause for local concern and that the boys went to Adams

L a t y m e r R e m e m b e r e d



TWO VIEWS OF THE
OLD LATYMER
IN CHURCH STREET

Judging from the clothes, the picture on the left is about 1900. The stone between the two windows on the right has been reset opposite the headmaster's office in the current building.



Old Latymer as printed on local postcards.

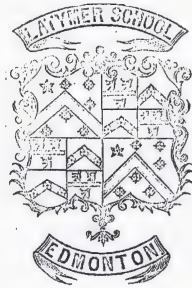
for free clothing rather than for instruction. With a curriculum limited to church catechism, geometry, arithmetic, scripture and Latin it was a narrow education even by the standards of the day. Of even greater concern were regular allegations from the 1840s onwards that The Trustees at best had mismanaged and at worst misappropriated the funds of the Foundation. The allegations did not go away and in 1862 the Charity Commissioners were forced to investigate. Having established that the annual income provided by the Foundation in 1864 amounted to £1182, they came to the conclusion that £901 had been embezzled, although the Trustees with 24 charities under their management argued vigorously that the missing money was due to defects of accounting procedures rather than misappropriation. Shortly after the publication of the Charity Commissioners' report, four of the trustees and Charles Henry Adams repaid £840 and Adams resigned as secretary to the Charity although he remained Headmaster of the school.

In 1865 Latymer was inspected by Daniel Fearnon, a member of the newly formed government inspectorate. His report revealed poor attendance, indifferent instruction, low standards and in one case the absence of an entire form without permission. Only in 1867, having secured an annual pension of £100, did Charles Adams resign in the expectation that he would be succeeded by his son who had already been appointed usher.

In 1865 a new Board of Trustees were appointed and they almost immediately sought the approval of the Charity Commissioners to abolish the free clothing awards and to use the funds to provide Edmonton with a secondary school divided into upper and lower divisions that would provide a grammar school education for the middle classes. The proposed scheme aroused immediate local opposition from the poorer classes who feared the loss of an ancient benefit. The dispute centred on the exact wording of Edward Latymer's will in which he had referred to the town of Edmonton, although many people assumed the benefit to extend to the parish of Edmonton with its four ecclesiastical districts of Lower Edmonton, Upper Edmonton, Winchmore Hill and Southgate. The Charity Commissioners set up a public enquiry in 1867

to examine the two separate issues of the claim of the outlying districts to any benefits that might accrue from the Edmonton charities and the claims of the poor for free clothing. Neither issue was settled quickly but within two months the Charity Commissioners had given the Trustees permission to set up a new school out of Foundation monies and to appoint the 33 year old Charles Vincent Dolbe as Headmaster, largely on the basis of his successful experience of organising middle class schools. To meet the claims of the outlying districts, £70 per annum was to be granted to each of St Paul's, Winchmore Hill, Christ Church, Southgate and St James, Upper Edmonton. The remainder of the income from the charities was to be used to fund Latymer Grammar school which was to be housed in Ann Wyatt's original building in Church Street. The new school was to be divided into an "Upper Branch" and a "Lower Branch". The Upper School was to provide an academic education including Latin, French, German, grammar, mechanics and architecture for boys from the age of 8. Fees were to be 30 shillings a quarter for boys from the parish of Edmonton and 50 shillings for boys from adjacent parishes. In addition the Trustees would nominate three free scholars a year as a result of competitive public examinations.

It was clear from the curriculum and the level of the fees that this was to be a middle class school catering for the needs of the newly emergent middle classes who were taking an increasingly prominent role in public life and were now demanding schools that would prepare their sons for entry into the professions. The Lower School was to be housed in the same building and was to provide a more utilitarian education for the sons of the inhabitants of the parish of Edmonton, with an emphasis on reading, writing, arithmetic and "such subjects of useful knowledge as the Trustees shall direct." Boys would be aged from 7-14 years and would pay fees of 7d a week although the trustees would be able to allocate 25 free places. The headmaster of the Upper School would appoint a head of the "Lower Branch" and would have authority over both schools. By proposing the creation of both a grammar school and an elementary school and retaining a proportion of free places, the Trustees were trying to placate both main factions. They failed in this,



LATYMER'S SCHOOL, EDMONTON,

WORKED BY A SOCIETY OF THE
CHARITY COMMISSIONERS.

PROSPECTUS OF THE UPPER SCHOOL.

Trustees.

Rev. K. S. GREGORY, M.A., Vicar of Edmonton, *Chairman*.
H. WASH, Esq., J.P., Edmonton, *Treasurer*.
J. R. ANNING, Esq., Burnside, Upper Edmonton.
T. T. BUSK, Esq., J.P., Winchmore Hill.
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K. SAWYER, Esq., Churchwarden, All Saint's, Edmonton.

Masters.

Rev. CHARLES VINCENT DOLBE, M.A., LL.D., Clare College, Cambridge,
Graduate in Civil Law by Examination, Trinity College, Dublin. *Head Master*.
Mr. ISAAC HENRY PEACH. *First Assistant Master*.
Mr. WILLIAM HENRY FARMER. *Second Assistant Master*.
Mr. FREDERICK CHILDERSTONE. *Shorthand Master*.

Secretary, Mr. H. HIORNS, Church Street, Edmonton.

and in 1868 opponents of the scheme took their case to the Court of Chancery on the grounds that Edward Latymer's bequest had been to help the poor, and therefore poverty, rather than merit, should be the chief test for supplicants. Lord Romilly, the Master of the Rolls, supported the Trustees new scheme, deciding that the primary object of Edward Latymer's will had been education rather than free clothing. In addition to this judgement, Lord Romilly disallowed the annual pension of £100 to Charles Adams.

Dr Dolbe was now free to organise the new school. He appointed Joseph Boyce as Headmaster of the Lower School and began the weekly advertisements on the front page of the Tottenham and Edmonton Weekly Herald that were to be a feature for the next forty years. In 1874 two new rooms were added to the Wyatt school building to cope with rising numbers. With 150 in the Lower School and 60 in the Upper it was clear that the aspirations of most inhabitants of Edmonton were met by the utilitarian education offered by Mr Boyce, although from 1870 it had been possible for members of the Lower School and the three outlying schools to win places at the Upper School with the results of the free scholarships published in the local press. In 1875 Dr Dolbe was appointed Chaplain to the Poor law Workhouse Union of the Strand and in return for light duties was paid a relatively generous £100 per annum. At the 1876 prizegiving Dr Dolbe proposed a gold medal for the first boy in the Upper School and a silver medal for the first boy in the Lower School, each inscribed with the new school motto PALMAM QUI MERUIT FERAT. Meanwhile Mr Boyce was doing so well in the Lower school that the Trustees built him a house on Sweet Briar Walk which in the late 19th century ran up to Church Street, although a legal dispute with the owner of neighbouring Laurel Villas cost the Trustees £300. Dr Dolbe was also a keen supporter of school sport and by the early 1880s Upper Latymer as it was increasingly referred to, had regular XIs in soccer and cricket and played a series of matches against the original Tottenham Hotspur and against Arsenal in 1891. Amongst the early Latymer soccer players was Percy Dormer 1882-85 whose brother Harold presented a shield to the school in 1923 in his memory, to be awarded to the house with the most points at the

The prospectus for Latymer Upper. The competition between the middle class fee paying schools was fierce and no opportunity would be lost to parade the success of the school in gaining entry to the professions and in the highly competitive civil service examinations.

TOTTENHAM AND EDMONTON

Weekly Herald

AND
NORTH MIDDLESEX ADVERTISER.

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED THE TOTTENHAM AND EDMONTON WEEKLY ADVERTISER.

LATYMER'S SCHOOL, EDMONTON,
Under the Control of Trustees.

HEAD MASTER—
REV. CHARLES VINCENT DOLBE, M.A., LL.D.
CLARE COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

Graduate in Civil Law by Examination, Trinity Coll., Dublin.

THE object of the Trustees is to provide a sound general Education for Boys of the Parish of St. Edmund. The Curriculum of the Upper School, worked according to the present scheme of the Commissioners, has proved a successful preparation for the University Local Examinations, Senior and Junior, London Matriculation, Home Civil Service, including Engineer Studentships, Incorporated Law Society, Royal College of Surgeons, Pharmacy, Natural Science, Science and Art Department, and Mercantile life.

The Religious instruction is in accordance with the principles of the Church of England; but no boy is compelled to receive such instruction against the wish of his parents, duly expressed in writing.

The Senior instruction in the Upper school consists, in addition to the ordinary English subjects, Mathematics, the Latin, French, and German languages and Drawing, with such other subjects as shall from time to time be authorized by the Trustees.

The School is annually inspected by the Syndicate of Cambridge or the Delegacy of Oxford.

Age for admission into the Upper school eight years. The charge for boys residing in Upper or Lower Edmonton Winchester Hill and Northgate, is the per quarter, and for non-parishioners 10s. Books, Stationery and other Materials for the use of pupils in the school 7s.6d. per quarter. No extras.

For further particulars, apply to the Head Master.

TOTTENHAM GRAMMAR SCHOOL.
(NEAR THE HIGH CROSS.—FOUNDED 1666).

Head Master - JOHN THOMAS COHEN, B.A. (London University).

Second Master	Mr J. W. TOMLINSON.
Third Master	Mr W. SUTTON, B.A.
Fourth Master	Mr G. W. JONES.
French	By the HEAD MASTER.
German Master	HEER EISNER.
Drawing Master	Mr H. C. NYLVESTER.
Singing Master	Mr KELLY.

F E E S :

For Boys under 10	-	40	per annum.
" between 10 and 12	-	47	"
" over 12	-	48	"

N.B.—There are no Extras.

The School, which was founded and endowed by Sarah, Duchess of Somerset, in 1666, was entirely reorganised under the "Endowed Schools Act," in 1870. The buildings have since been enlarged by the addition of three Class Rooms, and will now accommodate nearly 300 boys. There is a spacious playground, a portion of which is asphalted for use in wet weather.

There are Three Scholarships, entitling the holders to free education in the School up to the age of 17.

The work of the School is annually tested by an Examiner appointed by the Syndicate of Cambridge University.

Boys are prepared for the Cambridge Local Examinations. Results of last Five Examinations:—FORTY- EIGHT presented; FORTY-TWO passed. TWENTY-FIVE taking Honours. TWENTY Distinctions awarded in English, Latin, French, Religious Knowledge, Mathematics, and Drawing.

Prospectuses and Forms of Application can be obtained on application to the Head Master.

PARK MIDDLE CLASS SCHOOL,
NORTHUMBERLAND PARK.

Head Master - - - **G. P. COCHRANE**
(of Edin. Univ.)

Fees:—Under 9 years - 15s per Quarter.
Over 9 " - 20s

**Classes in French, Shorthand, Latin, Greek, Mathe-
matics, &c.**

Students are prepared for Civil Service and other Public Examinations.

Private Residence:—1, SOMERSET GROVE, PARK LANE, TOTTENHAM.

end of a year's competition.

An investigation in 1889 revealed 73 boys in the Upper School with 1 boarder and 190 in the Lower School, 25 having gained free places. Of increasing concern was competition from Enfield Grammar, Tottenham Grammar and the Grocers Company School. Dr Dolbe retired in 1897 with a pension of £120 per annum but despite his efforts Latymer was in decline, with a crumbling building, narrow curriculum and Middlesex County Council refusing to recognise the school as efficient and therefore denying it additional funding.



The gold Dolbe metal was awarded to the top boy in the Upper School and the silver medal to the top boy in the Lower School. Their rarity made them prized possessions

The Trustees now appointed William Shearer as the new Headmaster with the promise of a new building, fearing that if they did not act decisively the local school board would build a higher grade school that would take away the best pupils. Despite the poor state of the building, a lack of modern facilities and the threat of competition, the Trustees failed to act decisively until it was too late. Once again local opinion was aroused over the extent to which the local poor should benefit from

The Tottenham and Edmonton Weekly Herald for 5th August 1887. Advertisements like this appeared for more than 40 years as the Old Latymer attempted to attract fee paying pupils in a poor area against fierce competition from the new Middle Class Schools as well as the older foundations like Tottenham Grammar School.



The Reverend Charles Vincent Dolbé

Edward Latymer's bequest and whether a new elementary school, rather than a grammar school, would be more beneficial. By 1902 the roll had fallen to 32 with no sign of decisive action from the Trustees. In 1902 Middlesex took over responsibility for secondary education in Edmonton and proposed paying 50% of the cost of a new building, but by this time the remainder of the cost was more than the Trustees could afford. Rumours continued to abound over the mismanagement and misappropriation of the Foundation funds particularly when it was discovered that the Wild bequest that should have been used to send a poor scholar to Cambridge was being used to effect repairs on All Saints Church. In November 1904 the Board of Education refused to

recognise Latymer as a secondary school, hastening a further loss of pupils to the county schools particularly Enfield Grammar. The Trustees were now in the impossible position of being unable to afford a new building and yet were unwilling to hand over control of the endowment to Middlesex. This indecision consigned the school to a further period of rudderless drift and decline. Probably the situation was made no better by a headmaster who was addicted to strong drink, was regularly indisposed and who would tell the boys to "go and read a



William Shearer, the last headmaster of the Old Latymer. He had every right to feel let down and then betrayed by the Trustees of the Foundation

book in the corner.” Perhaps out of sympathy, a master named Collins was similarly afflicted and on several occasions was found by the boys in Church Street and assisted home. The final inspection held in 1907 revealed only three of the six classrooms to be usable, no science or Latin , poorly qualified staff and a headmaster increasingly seeking the solace of drink.

Such a damning report finally goaded the governors into decisive action although it was not until the Spring of 1909 that an agreement was reached with Middlesex County Council whereby the Latymer elementary school would be removed from the governors’ purview and that Middlesex would become the Trustees of the Latymer Foundation. They would build a school for boys aged 8-18 on a new site on Haselbury Road to be called the Edmonton Latymer School. William Shearer offered himself to the Trustees as the headmaster of the new school but they voted to close the Old Latymer at the Christmas of 1909 and to give notice to the headmaster and staff. Thus Shearer and his beleaguered staff, who struggled against a difficult situation not of their making, were not to be part of the new Latymer’s future. Temporary accommodation was found in Lamb’s Institute although 9 of the free scholars transferred to Enfield Grammar School.

Middlesex County Council now took over responsibility for appointing a new headmaster and chose Richard Ashworth who had previously made a great success of heading the Tottenham Pupil Teachers Centre and was now charged with taking over what was seen as a large scale educational experiment. For the past 10 years Edmonton Urban District Council had been pressing for a co-educational school and their arguments were strengthened by the Board of Education view that a poor area like Edmonton could not support a large selective school by admitting boys alone. In January 1910 the Board of Education gave its permission for the scheme to be altered to allow for a mixed school, not

as an educational experiment but as a pragmatic response to circumstances. By then building work had begun at the Haselbury Road site and for a little over £7000 the new school on Haselbury Road was built by Lawrence and Sons of Finsbury Circus and officially opened at 4p.m. on Saturday 24th September 1910 by the Chairman of the Middlesex Education Committee, Colonel Bowles. Ownership of the Church Street site passed to Middlesex who demolished the building to make way for the building of the Technical Institute. The new school had 25 pupils and a staff of 9 with a commitment to appoint more as pupil numbers increased. For Sir Brian Gott the new school was an opportunity to test the viability of a secondary school that was to be 3 times as large as the national average and to assess the effect of making secondary education available to 25% of children in a poor area, at a time when nationally only 5% of pupils won scholarships. The success of the new school was not a foregone conclusion as at the time “ the Latymer school stank in the nostrils of Edmonton” and much bad feeling had been engendered by the closure of Old Latymer and the failure to build a new elementary school. Initially only 2 scholarships were available and parents had to be persuaded to make the considerable financial investment that the fees represented. Tottenham and Enfield Grammar schools offered stiff competition and the new school was an unknown quantity that could not point to an illustrious past. Yet by 1914 the school had recruited 185 pupils, 110 boys and 75 girls and a Board of Education inspection revealed a school that from very unpromising beginnings was now thriving and had established a substantial reputation for itself not just within Edmonton but extending to most of North East London, Hertfordshire and Essex. In that brief period before the outbreak of war Richard Ashworth provided the school not only with outstanding leadership but also with the external trappings of a successful school, a house system, a speech day, an annual sports day, regular competitive sports fixtures, a school motto and above all a sense of belonging to a special community where the whole was greater than the sum of the individual parts.



*The original staff appointed in 1910. From left to right. Standing: Charlie Quilter, Jimmy North, Dorothy Abbott, Arthur Gibbs.
Sitting: Miss Curtis, Gertrude Moffatt, Richard Ashworth, Jane Davies.*

Henry Embleton, 1889-94

I attended Lower Latymer from 1889-94 which was then situated in the western half of the Latymer building in Church Street that we used to share with the Upper School. This was before the Lower School moved to Maldon Road. My father paid fees of 6d a week for tuition, textbooks and notebooks although when he died this was reduced to 4d a week. Although Dr Dolbe was in charge of both schools the headmaster of the Lower School was Mr Boyce who lived in the school house on the junction of Sweet Briar Walk and Church Street. The Upper School staff did not teach in the Lower School although Dr Dolbe was an enthusiastic disciplinarian and used to come into the Lower School to cane the miscreants guilty of the more serious offences. This may have been because Mr Boyce had a withered hand and found it difficult to muster the necessary vigour. He always deferred to Dr Dolbe who to us schoolboys was an awe inspiring figure. He was an austere and rather severe man in school but genial outside of school hours. In his physique he was upright and well built, of medium height with powerful shoulders. He was very interested in parish and church affairs and the Reverend Gregory of All Saints often sought his opinion and seemed to have faith in his judgement. All the staff though were greatly respected and commanded a considerable social position. In Edmonton, Latymer was regarded as superior to the surrounding schools particularly those where no fees were payable. The greatest honour that could be bestowed upon a boy was to win the Dolbe Silver Medal¹ which was awarded annually to the top boy in the Lower School. For those fortunate enough to be a recipient it was a treasured possession.

The Lower School had about 100 pupils with 7 standards covering ages 7-14 although very few pupils stayed on into Standard 7 and Standards 6 and 7 would normally be taught together. One teacher taught a standard for all subjects with Mr Boyce taking the oldest class. I would say that about 10% of the boys were very bright and the remainder were of about average ability² with about 40% being poor boys and the

remainder coming from respectable middle class families. I cannot remember many of my lessons but there was a very strong emphasis on good handwriting and arithmetic although we also studied subjects like geometry, algebra, history and geography. However, books were in very short supply and we had no additional equipment. I understand for example that some schools had a magic lantern for geography but that did not apply to Latymer although we did have some atlases.

We were marched to church quite often to attend services including Ascension Day and All Saints Day. There used to be a gallery in All Saints church where we would get up to pranks although this has been bricked up now. We played cricket and football on the Vicar's Field at the back of the church with the permission of Reverend Gregory. This field was also used for Sunday School treats, fetes and school sports.³

I left school at the age of 14 which was not unusual in those days, as there was no question of my mother being able to afford the cost of continuing my education and I became an apprentice goldsmith.

NOTES

1. The top pupil in the Upper School was awarded the Dolbe Gold Medal. The awarding of school prizes and medals started to become popular in the 1860s as part the Victorian concern with individual improvement.

2. These figures seem about right. Probably the most academically able went to Upper Latymer while those of lesser ability either attended the local board schools or avoided formal education altogether. Compulsory education between the ages of 5 and 10 was introduced by Sandon's Act of 1875 which also ordered the local boards of guardians to pay the fees of the poorest pupils. Free elementary education had to wait for the passing of the 1902 Education Act. One of the great struggles of late 19th century popular education was enforcing compulsory attendance in the face of indifference and public hostility.

3. The area of Vicars Field is now covered by a development of 1960s low rise flats.

Fred Horton, 1906-09

I attended Upper Latymer under Mr Shearer although by this time it had become very run down. A year after I started in 1907 Lower Latymer had left for Maldon Road as more than half of the rooms

in the Church Street building were unused or unfit for use. I do not think that this was the fault of Mr Shearer who struggled very hard in difficult circumstances. I blame mainly the governors who were mean with their money and there were suspicions that some of it had not been used properly or had even been embezzled. I did not realise it at the time but most of the textbooks that we used were very old fashioned, for example Gill's history and geography, Stedman's grammar for French and Pitmans manuals for Shorthand. We did not wear a school uniform and I cannot remember any boy receiving a

Latymer clothing grant although my father could remember this. We did though wear a blue badge on our caps showing the Latymer arms while those pupils in the Lower School wore a red badge. Mr Shearer quietly inculcated in us that The Upper Latymer was "The Latymer School" and we had no contact either scholastically or through sport with Lower Latymer, although pupils from there did win scholarships to the Upper School. Great hostility did exist between us and the board school boys who saw us as 'stuck up' and we had to 'run the gauntlet' if we did not keep to the main roads. Although we were very close to

All Saints Church I do not remember attending any services.¹ The library was merely a handful of books in a small cupboard. All I remember is Gulliver's Travels and some old bound volumes of Boys Own Paper and the Strand Magazine.



The whole of the Upper School in 1906 when Old Latymer was in terminal decline. The masters are 'Tubby' Eusden left, William Shearer centre and Mr Carlos right. Young Fred Horton is to the left of Mr Carlos.

We used to play football and cricket on Saturdays on Russells Field which was on the other side of Church Street between Salmonds Brook and Latymer Road although it was approached through Turner's nursery and Cyprus Road.² We also used to play midweek if Mr Shearer was 'indisposed'.³ In my time there were only three forms. Mr Shearer used to take the top form, Tubby Eusden took the middle form⁴ and Mr Carlos the youngest boys.

NOTES

1. Given the traditional links that existed between Latymer and All Saints it seems curious that Mr Horton has no memory of attending services. Henry Embleton 15 years previously remembers regular attendance at All Saints and in addition the terms of Edward Latymer's will dictated that all boys be instructed in scripture and Christian catechism. This is probably explained by the poor relations between Mr Shearer and the Vicar of All Saints R.S. Gregory who held incompatible opinions over the future status of Latymer. In contrast Dr Dolbe enjoyed an excellent relationship with Gregory's predecessor Henry Burrows.

2. This area is now covered by a 1980s estate called Streamside, presumably a reference to Salmonds Brook.

3. A contemporary of Fred Horton is less generous and his chief memory of Mr Shearer is that he “smoked cigarettes like a chimney and his moustache was permanently gingered. He did not do much towards teaching, in fact I can’t remember any thing that he did do.”

4. J.A.Morris states that Tubby Eusden took the kindergarten. Perhaps he alternated with Mr Carlos.

Right: An unfamiliar view of the ‘Old Hall’ facing northwards. The pictures hanging precariously are a reminder that it was used for art lessons as well as the girls’ drill lesson probably being taken by Nellie Garside. To the right are the classrooms that are now staff workrooms.



The children in this 1910 picture are clearly well fed and cared for. They have a look of alert intelligence about them as well as good posture. Note the half tiled walls and the inverted incandescent gas burners.



A science lesson from 1910. Note the Norfolk jackets and knickerbockers in those happy days before school uniforms. Even better is a pupil teacher ratio of 10:1. This was not to last as the school rapidly expanded.

Victor Jolly

I was born in 1900 in Edmonton and from an early age lived at 238 Fore Street¹ where my father owned a well known business Jolly the Printer. I attended Brettenham Road School and also St James (Upper Edmonton) until in 1910 we moved to Kenwood Road, Lower Edmonton.

From there I went Croyland Road elementary school from where I gained a free place scholarship to Latymer although this was not until I was 13.

For my last two years at Croyland Road I was really a monitor to Mr Belton the headmaster, looking after the stationery cupboard, distributing the chalk and circulating magazines such as the Strand, Pearsons and Popular Science to the teachers who bought them. I was very happy for these two years although I marked time scholastically until I entered Latymer. I did not start until I was thirteen because I failed the scholarship examination at my first attempt.²

Edmonton was still quite countrified and we were great walkers in those days. We would think little of walking out to Chingford or Cheshunt. I remember at Croyland Road one of our teachers Mr F.Wise would take us on a day's walk through Edmonton, Enfield, Northaw, Cuffley, Goffs Oak onto Temple Bar and back. It was an enjoyable twenty mile tramp and of course most of it was unbroken countryside.

Most of my time at Latymer coincided with the First World War which meant some depletion of the male members of staff. As a result, the whole of the science sixth form, that is my friend Arthur Smith and myself went to Tottenham County School for physics and chemistry lessons given by Miss Clarice Speed and Mr William Ware respectively. We travelled by tram and were given special dispensation by Dickie to arrive late for afternoon lessons. After leaving school I lost touch with

Arthur Smith until we exchanged letters in 1985, brought about by a note in the newsletter published by the Latymer Old Students' Association.

Signs of the war were quite clear to us school children. On the field at the back of the school was a balloon barrage to discourage low level bombing raids, presumably from Zeppelins. At lunch times we used to entertain ourselves by going over to the anchorage site and watching them being wound in. One Saturday morning we were preparing an exhibition in the hall when there was an air raid and the anti-aircraft battery began firing. We had to take cover in the school basement and after the "all clear" I picked up some warm shrapnel from one of the bombs and included it in the exhibition. Our main contribution to the war effort was that we dug up a corner of the school field at the north end and turned it into an allotment for growing much needed vegetables. I also volunteered with a number of form mates to work on a farm during the school holidays and was taken to Yardley Gobion in Northamptonshire by Mr Dyer and Monsieur Maelstaf, a Belgian refugee who taught us French. During the last year of the war we went to Okehampton in Devon where we helped with the harvesting and pulled thistles for the pittance of fourpence an hour. I was called up from there to go into the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve.

Although most children came from Edmonton, I remember that three boys, Threadgold, Shearman and Weavers came from Waltham Cross on the tram. They were not a very bright trio but Weavers distinguished himself by throwing an apoplectic fit in assembly so creating a great sensation. The school was small and overcrowded with all the classrooms coming off the hall and some lessons such as art and woodwork taking place in the Technical Institute in Church Street. The science facilities were very limited although with only two pupils in the Upper Sixth it was not a high priority.³ One practical effect of these cramped

conditions was that many of our lessons were held against a background of girls' drill with piano accompaniment organised by Miss Garside⁴ in the hall.

Latymer was a soccer school then although I do remember one master making an unsuccessful attempt at introducing rugby. The popularity of soccer was partly due to the deputy Headmaster Jimmy North⁵ who had been a keen soccer player and was a professionally qualified referee. It was not unknown for him, when taking an RE lesson, for the class to have a quick 5 minutes on the bible and then the boys would go outside for soccer

practice leaving the girls in the classroom. Cricket was the main summer sport for the boys and the scorebook for the 1918 First XI records matches with the local police and soldiers from the adjacent balloon barrage as well as the usual list of fixtures with local schools.⁶

My most illustrious classmate was my good friend 'Choc' Summerscale who as well as being an outstanding sportsman was a brilliant scholar and went up to Cambridge to read modern languages, joined the diplomatic service and was rewarded with a knighthood and as far as I am aware was the first Latymerian to be so honoured. His opposite number among the girls, also outstanding on the sports field and in the classroom, was Edith 'Withie' Hill. She was a popular figure and was the only pupil in our year to pass the Matriculation Examination with honours. I remember very clearly posting the matriculation scripts at Raggs Post Office on Edmonton Green and how we played tennis while awaiting the postman bearing our results.

It is difficult to overestimate the influence that Dickie Ashworth had on us. He knew us all individually and strove to inculcate in us by example



Farming for the war effort. Vic Jolly and 'Choc' Summerscale at Okehampton in 1918.

and encouragement that subtle mix of qualities that make a fine man or woman. I can do no better than recommend the reader to get hold of the collection of sincere tributes published at the time of Dickie's Centenary Dinner in April 1969.⁸ He taught us French, laying so much emphasis on correct pronunciation that we spent the whole of the first term practising phonetics as a preparation for learning the language itself. It would seem that Dickie, appalled by the open indefinite vowels of the southerners, was determined to purify our speech and give us a fresh start in a foreign language. I

particularly remember seeing him with Monsieur Maelstaf the language assistant, gesticulating wildly to each other in true gallic fashion as they crossed Pymmes Park. There was an occasion when Dickie sent a small group of us more advanced pupils to attend a Sunday morning service at a French church. I had no prouder day than when I visited the school five years after I had left and was able to tell Dickie that I had been awarded my doctorate.

In marked contrast with the flourishing orchestral and choral activities of present day Latymer there was little music instruction beyond a rather poor choir, in which the boys croaked their way through a few teaching pieces. Because there were no peripatetic teachers in those days I took up the violin with a local teacher and am still playing after eighty years of diligent practice.

Although Latymer was a co-educational school the boys and girls were kept very separate. The girls always entered from the south end and the boys from the north. The closest that we got to any fraternisation was in the sixth form, walking around the grounds with a few sixth form



A pageant or fancy dress held in 1917. Vic Jolly is standing on the left in the peaked cap.

girls and having an exchange of views on some serious issues although these would be leavened with flippant comment. Inevitably there was some pairing off and I married a Latymerian although she was not one of my contemporaries.

I matriculated in 1917 and stayed on into the sixth form to study science. I was due to take up a Latymer university scholarship at London University but in September 1918 I was called up into the Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve and so lost the first term. I did not start until January 1919 and spent most of the year in uniform. I then had to catch up with those who started in the September by working through the long vacation. I was very lucky to get a Latymer scholarship for £60 because

without it a university education would not have been possible. For 5 years from 1919 to 1924 I commuted to Gower Street. Edmonton was very convenient as a tram terminus and I used to catch the last cheap workmans tram at 7-30 in the morning which got me in on time for a 9 o'clock lecture.

After gaining his doctorate Victor Jolly was appointed to a lectureship in Chemistry at Armstrong College which was the Newcastle branch of the University of Durham but after 4 terms he left to become Chief Chemist with Walpamur (later Crown Paints) where he remained until retirement in 1965 after forty years service, the last eleven as Research Director.

NOTES

1. Occupying the site of Jolly the Printers today at 238 Fore Street are the accountants Wason & Wason. Given the acts of municipal vandalism that have been committed by the London Borough of Enfield along the eastern side of Fore Street over the past 30 years, this is little short of miraculous.
- 2.The normal age of admission to Latymer was 11 although in 1911 a preparatory class was introduced catering for children between the ages of 8 and 10.
3. Dickie Ashworth was certainly very aware of Latymer’s poor science facilities and the waste of pupil and teacher time in commuting to the Technical Institute. In 1921 he began to pressure Middlesex to authorise and finance the expansion of the school. Middlesex were not forthcoming and in 1924 the Foundation funded a major building programme adding 12 classrooms and increasing the capacity of the school from 150 to 335 pupils. This development is now known as the North Block and was opened in 1926. Almost immediately afterwards an even larger building programme was begun, the centrepiece of which was the Great Hall opened in 1928 by the Duke and Duchess of York.
4. Nellie Garside taught girls “physical culture” from the opening of the school

- in Haselbury Road until 1932.
5. Jimmy North was one of the original appointments made in 1910 and from 1917 as Senior Master he was Dickie Ashworth’s ‘right hand man’. He left in 1929 when he became headmaster of Edmonton County School. He features in virtually all of the photographs of boys sports teams taken during this era.
6. Dr Jolly is too modest to mention that during the 1918 season he topped the bowling averages and also scored the highest individual innings of the season. He still owns the bat that marks that season.
7. John Summerscale became one of the first Latymer pupils to win a place at Cambridge and in 1926 joined the elite Levant Consular Service set up to man consular posts in the Ottoman Empire, Persia and North Africa. It was later merged with the Diplomatic Service. In 1938 he joined the British Embassy in Washington and played an important role in negotiating the Lend Lease arrangement at the beginning of the Second World War. He was knighted in 1960, the year he retired from the diplomatic service and became an editor for Penguin books. Sir John Summerscale died in 1980.
8. Copies of this are available from the school.

Edith Knight

My earliest recollections of Latymer go back to 1909 when I was about four years old. A Sunday morning walk with my grandfather across Pymmes Park and the open fields which then lay between the park and Church Street¹, brought us to Haselbury Road, then not much more than a gravelled track. There, standing in the fields, was a new building still with the scaffolding in place. This of course was the new Latymer school. An indirect acquaintance with Latymer goes back even further because my mother on several occasions had tea with Dr Dolbe at the old school in Church Street.

I was very lucky to get in because Edmonton only gave six scholarships, three for boys and three for girls. The examination consisted of a

written paper in English and arithmetic that I took at my primary school St James'. The top six then proceeded to another written test at the old Technical Institute in Church Street.² The two survivors then faced the ordeal of a viva at Latymer conducted by the Headmaster and his staff. For those who did not win a scholarship the fees were £2 12s 6d for pupils living in the Borough of Edmonton.³ Latymer was the only grammar school in Edmonton although there was Enfield Grammar school for boys, Enfield County School for girls and Edmonton School which was then a Higher Grade elementary school. My mother would have preferred me to go to Tottenham High School for girls because she was worried about me going to a co-educational school which in those days was a very radical idea.⁴ My late husband's eldest brother, Bob



TWO VIEWS OF THE NEW BUILDING

*The picture on the left is taken from the 1910 prospectus and shows Haselbury Road which was little more than a farm track with kerbstones.
The picture on the right shows the view from the south end where the boys entered.*



Form IV in 1920. Two members went on to achieve considerable prominence. Mark Abrams (far right), 1906-94. Attended Latymer 1917-24 before going to LSE and then studying in the United States where he pioneered work on market research as a means of diagnosing social trends. He pioneered the use of opinion surveys and was a key figure in the attempts of Hugh Gaitskell to modernise the Labour Party after the 1959 election defeat. Mark Abrams deeply impressed Harold Wilson with his research methods and must take some of the credit for the 1964 Labour victory.

Queenie Leavis née Roth, to the left of Mark Abrams, sitting and wearing spectacles. 1906-81. Attended Latymer 1917-24 and was awarded the Carlisle scholarship to Girton College, Cambridge where she took 1st Class Honours in the English Tripos in 1928. In 1929 she married F.R. Leavis 'enfant terrible' of English literary criticism, working jointly with him until his death in 1978. She lectured and wrote widely on the Brontës, Jane Austen and George Eliot. Tragically Queenie Roth's parents and younger sister Ruby, also a Latymer pupil, were killed when a German land mine hit their drapers shop in Silver Street in December 1940.

attended the old Latymer in Church Street and when that closed he went to Enfield Grammar School and then two terms later left to become one of the original ten pupils to enter the Haselbury Road school.⁵

The building that I attended was very small and all on ground level. It comprised the north end which was taken up with the men's staffroom and the girls' cloakrooms. Beyond was what is now the Old Hall, flanked on either side by classrooms (now the staffrooms and library) the chemistry laboratory and Balance Room. At the south end was the Headmaster's study with the boys' cloakroom and the women's staffroom. Here there was a wooden screen on runners that could be used to create another classroom.⁶ Everything to the south of that was the playground and of course the art room and the two gyms had not

yet been built. The Hall was the centre of school life. Here we began the day with assembly, sat down to our midday lunch and carried out PT exercises although with three hundred pupils in the school it was very crowded. Because it was not possible to fit in all the parents for evening functions, we used to use the Central Methodist Hall in the High Street for plays and musical evenings. I can remember reciting Tennyson's Victim and standing on the stage on a very hot night with the west door open and seeing a red tram passing by. This arrangement lasted until the opening of the Great hall in 1928.

Much more important than the school building was the fact that we were lucky enough to have a great headmaster in Dickie Ashworth. He was the major influence on the lives of so many of the early Latymerians. His aim was to turn out people who were educated in the



1921-22 netball side.

widest sense of the word and he inspired in us a sense of wonder and humility and a tradition of self discipline which can still be seen in the school today. His assemblies made a great impression although they were not religious in a sectarian way. They consisted of a hymn, a prayer and then a discourse usually based on one of the parables or Aesop's Fables in which he was able to persuade us that what he was saying was directed at each of us personally and was the truth.

On only a handful of occasions can I remember the Deputy Headmaster Jimmy North taking assembly instead. Dickie's favourite prayer was by Robert Louis Stevenson and it started "behold our family here assembled, we thank thee for this place in which we dwell...."

By the time I started, a school uniform had been introduced. School uniform for the girls was those awful box pleat tunics with white blouses, black woollen stockings and black shoes with a straw boater and a light and dark blue band while in winter we wore a navy blue velour hat. For the boys it was a dark blue blazer with brass buttons and either grey shorts or long trousers and you never saw a boy without his cap. The curriculum that we followed was compared with that of today very limited but all the basic subjects were very well taught. Most forms worked towards the Matriculation Examination which meant passing in seven subjects at more the 50%. If one subject was dropped then they all had to be taken again either at Christmas or the following year. At this time Matriculation was a considerable qualification and opened the way for entry into the professions.⁷ The great majority of pupils then left at 16 but if you did stay on into the sixth form then you took your intermediate exams as a preparation for university. The only language offered was French although it was possible to study Latin in the 6th form. Science meant chemistry although the boys were able to study Mechanics and Heat, Light and Sound while the girls did domestic work at the Technical Institute in Church Street or singing with Mr Quilter. He was a lovable little man who we tormented and behaved badly towards although he seemed to bear us no ill will.

I remember particularly the Senior Mistress Dorothy Abbott⁸ who,



The Reverend Sanders in the bathchair attending the sports day of 1917. He was the first Chairman of Governors of the new school in Haselbury Road and continued the tradition of close links between All Saints Church and Latymer.

although rather stiff and formal, was determined to make young ladies of us and was always ready to reprimand us for slovenly speech and dress and used to set an example by turning up to speech day wearing a black or purple velvet dress with long kid gloves. She was a very kind person although she could also be intimidating when we behaved like "Barrats factory girls." (Barrats of Wood Green were wholesale confectioners.) Alice Lindford, who wrote the words to the school song was a marvellous teacher with the ability to make poetry come alive. It is to her and my mother that I owe the great love of poetry which has been with me all my life.⁹

There were four houses then, Latymer, Wyatt, Lamb and Keats although when my husband had attended the school 5 years earlier there had only been two houses, Latymer and Wyatt. House matches were a particularly important part of school life.¹⁰ Sometimes if it was a nice day Dickie would order an end to lessons and we would all go out onto the field to take part in house matches. I remember one day having house matches on Empire Day and Dickie taking out a wind up gramophone



On a field visit to Caterham organised by Sebert Dyer in 1921. Edith Knight is in the front row fourth from the left.

and playing Dame Clara Butt singing Land of Hope and Glory and then speeding it up and laughing uproariously at his own joke. A great fuss was made of Christmas parties for each form and parents would bring in jellies and sandwiches, trifles and sausage rolls. It was all part of the family atmosphere that Dickie tried to build up.

At the time that I left in 1922 the first school plays were being held which annoyed me as I had just won a scholarship to RADA and I would have enjoyed the experience. To my great annoyance my father persuaded me against accepting because acting was seen as a very precarious profession in those days with no radio and television work and film still in its infancy. It was my impression that in those early days

Latymer did not shine in music and drama although I do remember amongst the early productions a marvellous Midsummer Nights Dream directed by Maisie Cobby, the first drama teacher, and a production of the Magic Flute by the first music teacher Ronald Cunliffe¹¹ that George Bernard Shaw came along to.¹²

The school sports day was a great social occasion for the whole of the local community. It was held on a Saturday and lasted all day. It was one of the great Edmonton events . I remember cycling down Haselbury Road and hearing the oompah oompah of the Edmonton town band as it approached the school. Although it was an athletics event there was also a very strong emphasis on fun events like the egg and spoon race

and the slow bicycle race. Whole families used to come along with picnics and enjoy a day out. The ladies were expected to do the flower arranging and lay the tables while the men did the organising and marshalling.¹³ I remember standing on a chair at sports day in 1929 cheering on Lamb house when I was approached by Victor Davies the new Headmaster who asked me what I thought was the secret of Dickie Ashworth's success. Unfortunately I cannot remember what my reply was. The great formal event of the year was the school speech day that had been a major event in the days of Dr Dolbe. For at least the first few years that I was there we opened with the Harrow school song 'Forty Years On'. I sometimes gave the recitation and then often there was an extract from a Shakespeare play, for example the scene with Bottom in *Midsummer Nights Dream* or a contribution from the school choir which in those days was not very good. Another happy memory is of an annual outing organised by Dr Dyer our geography master who would take us to Caterham in Surrey where we would walk over the Downs to Godstone and at the end there would be trestle tables laden with jam sandwiches, hardboiled eggs and cups of tea.

Most children lived locally and would go home for lunch but a small number would stay for school dinner¹⁴ cooked by the caretaker's wife Mrs Brooks who prepared it in the caretaker's house and would then bring it over in an insulated trolley. We would eat it in the hall with grace being said at the beginning and the end of the meal. Mrs Brooks was later assisted by a Mrs Collins who produced an infamous college pudding that was a truly horrible concoction of heavy pastry, jam and watery custard. We could also buy just a pudding if we had brought sandwiches or if we brought in a pie from home, Mrs Brooks would heat it up for a penny. Later on we ate our meals in the army hut which was situated at the north end of the school next to the caretaker's garden. This had been acquired from the military who until the end of the war were billeted in huts in fields to the south of the school. Their function was to send up enormous balloons over the school whenever enemy aircraft were sighted. If it was a wet lunchtime then out would come the record player and and we would have dancing in the hall, practising our waltzes and polkas for the Christmas party.

Most of us walked to school in those days, some a distance of up to four miles although the children that came up from Hornsey must have come up by tram. Hardly anyone owned a car although Dickie Ashworth bought one in his last year at Latymer, the year that he died. In the early 1930s Joe Morris, John Wilson and George Taylor bought a car between them and a few years later Jack Hurst bought one. In those days Haselbury Road was unlit and on the winter evenings Dickie Ashworth used to say "now boys it's dark outside and I trust that you will act in a gentlemanly fashion." He meant that they should accompany the girls home. I did not own my first bicycle until I was fourteen which was not unusual then.

I did not stay on into the sixth form and Dickie Ashworth advised me to attend the Maria Grey teacher training college near Cricklewood where I trained for two years using the Froebel method¹⁵. I was very fortunate in that the Foundation gave me one of its three grants of £60 a year which was then a considerable sum of money. I also received a grant from Middlesex although I had to agree to teach in a Middlesex school for three years after qualifying. I then taught in a small independent school in Cricklewood before teaching in an elementary school in Edmonton but when I married at the age of 24 I had to resign because of the marriage bar.¹⁶

In the Summer of 1939 it was clear to many of us that war was imminent and some staff including Mr Davies did not go away on holiday because of a fear that war might break out and they would be needed. My husband and I did go away though, having a fortnight in the Lake District, followed by a week staying with friends in Leeds and then a week's sea bathing at Robin Hood's Bay in Yorkshire. It was while we were there having coffee in a cafe that we heard the news over the wireless that all teachers were to return to their schools. We travelled back the same day and Teddy¹⁷ went into a staff meeting where they were told to report with their wives to school the next day in readiness for being evacuated. We walked across Pymmes Park to Silver Street Station where we caught a train for an unknown destination. It was only when we stopped at a station in Essex that we began to

develop a vague idea of where we were going. When we arrived at Clacton we were met by various officials including a billeting officer and taken to a local school. Another staff wife, Hilda Parsloe and myself were given 12 children each and told to get them billeted. This proved to be very difficult partly because we were in a very poor part of Clacton and many of the Latymer children were billeted in houses that must have been a bit of a shock to them given the sort of homes that most of them came from. The two of us spent the night with a Salvation Army officer and his wife although it was clear that this could only be a temporary arrangement. The next day it was glorious autumn weather and most of the staff went to Marks and Spencer to buy bathing costumes. Each day Mr Davies the Headmaster, Mr Champion the Deputy and Billy Cunliffe walked along the front debating the issues that concerned them. They were dubbed "The Blessed Trinity." After a few days Mr Davies proposed that the 5th and 6th form should be moved to quite a grand hotel on the seafront towards Holland on Sea called the Hadleigh Hotel. The proprietor was initially pleased because he had feared that the hotel might be taken over by the army, and schoolchildren were less likely to cause damage. After about three weeks the proprietor approached Mr Davies for more money which was not possible as the rates were fixed by the government. As a result we were asked to leave and there was a lot of unpleasantness on both sides.

The initial excitement of being in a new town in beautiful autumn weather soon wore off, partly because of the exceptionally bitter weather that winter when the sea froze around the edges. In early spring we were playing three handed bridge with our landlady when we heard a massive explosion caused by a landmine dropped from an aircraft which at first we thought had hit a house with Latymer children in it. Because of this it was decided to leave Clacton and about two weeks later we travelled directly by train to Tonypany where, in contrast to Clacton, we were given a tremendous reception. After the children had been billeted Teddy and myself found ourselves in the late evening with nowhere to sleep except the floor of the church hall. In an act of true kindness the billeting officer asked us to spend the night at her parents' cottage giving up her bedroom for us and getting out the best linen. She

apologised that it was a poor rough cottage but that was more than made up for by their heartfelt generosity. The next morning she found us some comfortable digs with the miner who was in charge of the mine lamphouse. They were a lovely family who accepted us immediately. In fact this year was the first Christmas that I had not heard from Gerwin, the youngest son who was about my age. I received recently a letter from his wife Rhiannon telling me that he had died. After I had been there for just a week Mrs Deare sent off to Cardiff for a birthday cake for me and organised a small party as well as making me an embroidered teacloth. The children were happy at Tonypany because although many of the homes were rough and ready there was real warmth and they felt that they were wanted and there was no feeling like there had been in Clacton that they were an intrusion. There was a visible sense of community that was based around coal mining. Sometimes I used to climb up on to the mountainside to look at the mine. You always knew when the miners were coming off shift because you could hear them singing in the distance as they came up the slope and then the lights of their lamps would appear. They were very friendly and were always prepared to sit down with their black faces and chat.

I returned to Latymer a few nights before the Blitz began and some of the heaviest raids of the war. A few nights later docklands was ablaze and in our garden in Green Dragon Lane we found pieces of charred paper and wood that had drifted over in the breeze.

NOTES

1. This area is now covered by the Hyde Estate built in 1923 as a response to the Homes Fit For Heroes campaign after the Great War. J.A.Morris suggests that the Hyde estate was deliberately sited opposite the school by Edmonton Borough council because of its long standing hostility to Latymer. If such hostility did exist then it was not consistent. The 1933 guide for the Borough of Edmonton proudly refers to Latymer as "the University of Edmonton."

2. The Technical Institute was owned by Middlesex County Council and had been built on the site of the Old Latymer in Church Street. It has now been demolished and on the site stands John Adams Court, a sheltered accommodation complex owned by the London Borough of Enfield. John Adams was headmaster

from 1781 to 1800 and was the first of the family dynasty who were to control Latymer until the appointment of Dr Dolbe in 1868.

3. The fees in 1910 when the school reopened were £1 11s 6d per term for “bona fide residents in the ancient parish of Edmonton” and £2 2s per term for other pupils. As with virtually all grammar schools Latymer charged fees for tuition and books although some pupils received scholarships. The numbers of scholarship pupils increased significantly after Middlesex took over responsibility for the new school in 1910. During the inter war years approximately 25% of Latymer pupils won scholarships. The charging of fees was ended by the 1944 Education Act.

4. The author can find no earlier example of a co-educational grammar school. The higher grade schools were more advanced elementary schools that attempted to provide an education beyond the utilitarian schooling envisaged in the 1870 Education Act. They were not created as a result of government policy but through the initiatives of individual school boards. There were widespread misgivings about higher grade schools amongst those who feared the dangers of educating the working class “beyond their station in life.” The school boards were created in 1870 by the Liberal government as locally elected authorities to administer state funded elementary education. Many of them turned out to be radical progressive organisations often at variance with central government policy. As a result they were abolished by the Conservative government in 1902 and responsibility for state education was passed over to the various local authorities. For most of the period of these interviews Latymer was under the control of Middlesex County Council although the existence of an ancient foundation and a board of trustees made its position different from that of the county schools.

5. In the first admissions register for 1910 Bob Knight is pupil number three.

6. May Bennett nee Munns Senior Mistress 1970-81 has a handsome Oregon pine table made for her by Tom Spurgeon out of the wood from the screen.

7. Roughly the same proportion of the school population matriculated in the 1920s as graduates today from universities.

8. Dorothy Abbott was appointed Senior Mistress in 1913 after the resignation of the first Senior Mistress Jane Davies who married Clement Davies, later to become leader of the Liberal party.

9. Alice Lindford wrote the words to the school song in 1924 to celebrate the tercentenary of Latymer. Bad feeling arose because of the parsimony of Middlesex Education Committee in refusing to make any payment for the composition.

10. The original houses were named after Latymer and Wyatt the principal benefactors. With the expansion of the school after the First World War Keats and Lamb were added in 1919 followed by Dolbe and Ashworth in 1929.

11. Ronald Cunliffe, the first music master in the new school, wrote the music for the school song.

12. The visit by George Bernard Shaw was in 1929 after Mrs Knight had left. Can it be a coincidence that shortly after his visit he wrote “Hell is full of amateur musicians, music is the brandy of the damned”?

13. If Edith Knight had attended sports day 10 years earlier in 1913 she would have remembered the incident in which a Latymer pupil shot and wounded a schoolfriend with a partly loaded six bullet revolver. The culprit was arrested by the police and withdrawn from school.

14. A legal obligation for state schools to provide meals was introduced in 1907 by the reforming Liberal government that also introduced old age pensions and National Insurance. In part this was a response to national fears of a decline in the health of the nation that had been exposed by the large proportion of recruits for the Boer War who were rejected as unfit for service.

15. The Froebel Method emphasised learning through everyday things. For example children were not allowed toys in order to stimulate the imagination and excite intellectual curiosity.

16. The marriage bar was part of the female teachers employment contract whereby she agreed to resign in the event of her marriage. For many men at this time a working wife was a sign that her husband could not afford to keep her. The practice was ended in 1940 as a result of the Second World War because of the shortage of teachers.

17. Edith Knight’s husband, Edward Knight taught at Latymer for 39 years up until his retirement in 1967 and was Deputy Headmaster for the last 5 years of his service. For 26 years he was Head of Mathematics and also Head of North Block and Head of Middle Block.

Hermon Taylor, 1918-23

I was born in 1905 in Workington, Cumberland where my father was a teacher in a primary school and had obtained both BA and BSc degrees at his teacher training college at Isleworth. My mother had also been a teacher and in 1895 had been awarded the Queen's Prize for "Physiography", but in those days before the emancipation of women, all that had to stop when she got married.

In 1910 my father was appointed to a headmastership in St Helens, Lancashire where I attended Cowley School. Came the Great War and by 1918 the country was so drained of manpower that he was due to be drafted into the army at the age of 45. He would teach by day and drill in the evenings and occasionally would bring his rifle home for me to play with – so heavy, I could barely raise it up to my shoulder. However in the summer of that year my father was appointed to be Director of Education for Edmonton and we managed to find a house at 157 Church Street, just 200 yards

from Latymer school.¹ I was 13 and Mr Ashworth said, yes, he would have me. He was not very tall and I remember his penetrating but kindly eyes and his round and ruddy face. My father paid the fees and that little building with its assembly hall and classrooms off was my life for the next five years. I was put into Latymer house and had a school uniform which was a blue blazer with brass buttons and long grey trousers with black shoes.²

The war was not yet over during that first autumn term and I remember an incident when a light aeroplane made a forced landing on the recreation ground next to the school. Heavy iron gates locked it in, but after dark I climbed over the fence, got into the cockpit and sat in the pilot's seat. It was a biplane with canvas covered wings, wooden struts and bracing crosswires. I then sneaked back home undetected.

Among the teachers that I remember most clearly are Dickie Ashworth himself, who taught French



The House Captains for 1923. Hermon Taylor is standing on the left.

because he loved the sound of it. He sat me and another boy called Hosking in the front row of the class because we were below standard. There was no escape and he worked on us at every opportunity and when the holidays came and we went to say goodbye he pointed to the two lines across his forehead and said "Voici Hosking; voici Tailleur!"

Then there was Miss Moffatt³ who laboured to teach me English. She was small thin and very sarcastic. She had a hard time trying to get anything out of me and with the arrogance of youth I reckoned that science was the thing and that everybody knew English anyway! Dickie Ashworth called me a scientific barbarian. Poor Miss Moffatt, I don't think that she was very happy. I remember her going on about Chaucer's Wife of Bath who had five husbands "atte churche door" but what about the others that Chaucer implied were not at the "churche door"? I didn't know what she was talking about. I was 16.

There was Jimmy North, tall but stooping with a worried look and suits that did not fit him. He taught maths and when making a point he would hold his right forefinger up in the air but as the top joint was bent over sideways the effect was less than complete. A born teacher, he loved his job and he gave his spare time to teach us football and to referee matches.⁴

Later on came Ernest Balls who taught advanced maths and physics to a budding sixth form. He was not long back from the war and was still drained by the experience. He had been a corporal in the infantry in the trenches and he had to take patrols out in no-man's-land at night to capture a prisoner for interrogation, if he could. It was kill or be killed. He spoke of it only once under provocation from me when I was a week-end guest at his house which he had built himself after he was demobbed. I admired him very much but I think that he had a hard time trying to develop his sixth form to the level needed for Cambridge.

Whilst still at Latymer I had not yet formed the ambition to go into medicine. The incident that changed this is still vivid in my memory. My father became very ill with septicaemia due to a huge carbuncle on

his back. Our doctor said that he would have to cut it out and that I must help him. Next day he came with his instruments, laid my father over the end of the bed and slowly and methodically began to excise the carbuncle. With no anaesthetic my father fainted, but the doctor just carried on with his forceps and scalpel until he had finished. There was a large bleeding hole which he packed with a great pad of dressing and I had to press on this to control the haemorrhage until it was deemed safe to apply the bandages and get my father back to bed. Next day the doctor showed me how to do the dressing and I was left in charge until the wound had healed. It was all long before the health service, long before antibiotics; the raw practice of medicine as it was in 1923.

That experience jolted me out of my teenage simplicity. I now saw the world as it was and I thought a lot about that doctor. He had undoubtedly saved my father's life, his knowledge and experience told him what was to be done and he did it, not shrinking from the dreadfulness of it but keeping his head when he found that the carbuncle was much more extensive than he had anticipated. My father recovered; the doctor said that I had done well and my father said how gentle I was with the dressings. Suddenly I realised what I wanted to do with my life and that October in 1923 I went up to Cambridge to read medicine.

Hermon Taylor went up to St John's, Cambridge with a Latymer scholarship and obtained a 1st Class Tripos in Natural Sciences. In 1926 he went to St Bartholomew's Hospital Medical School and qualified as a doctor in 1929 and shortly afterwards became a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons. Following surgical appointments at the Hertford and Lincoln hospitals he became part-time Surgical Registrar at the Prince of Wales Hospital, Tottenham and Demonstrator in Pathology at St Bartholomew's before being appointed Surgical First Assistant at the London Hospital. Here under Sir James Walton he became interested in gastroenterology and designed a new type of flexible gastroscope. This made the interior of the stomach visible and radically changed the

approach to the diagnosis of gastric diseases. It was widely used for the next 20 years until the Japanese fibre optic system rendered it obsolete.

In 1939 Hermon Taylor became a consultant surgeon at the London Hospital and King George Hospital, Ilford. With the dispersal of the teaching hospitals during the war he went to St Andrew's Billericay where a degenerate Poor Law institution was transformed into a modern hospital. This work during the 1940s helped to create the framework for the National Health Service in the London region.

In 1960 Hermon Taylor was invited to become a Latymer governor but unfortunately their Friday afternoon meetings were held at the same time as one of his operating sessions and reluctantly he had to decline the invitation. Hermon Taylor retired in 1970.

NOTES

1. The site of 157 Church Street is now local authority flats built in 1962.
2. A recognisably modern school uniform was introduced in 1918 as a response to wartime clothing shortages.
3. Gertrude Moffatt taught English at Latymer from 1913 to 1925 and was notoriously acerbic in her relations with pupils. Early photographs and the comments of her pupils reveal her to have been a rather beautiful young woman. She later became headmistress of a school in Putney.
4. The Latymer commitment to soccer goes back to at least 1881 when a Latymer XI played the first of several matches against Tottenham Hotspurs although in at least two of the games Latymer fielded 12 players to the indignation of the Tottenham side.



Coverage from the Daily Graphic of the opening of the Great Hall in 1928 by the Duke and Duchess of York. The cost of the new extensions was £67,000 compared with £6782 that it had cost to build the main school only 18 years previously. In 1966 the Queen Mother returned to open the new extensions including the gymnasias and art block.

Ken Gooch, 1926-32

I was born in 1915 at 13 Derby Road, Ponders End and attended Southbury Road School until the age of 11 after which I went to Latymer having failed to get in to Enfield Grammar School. My father arranged for my sister and I to attend Latymer partly because we had moved to Firs Avenue, Bush Hill Park and also my cousin Marie Spurgeon¹ was a pupil. I was not a scholarship pupil and my father paid the fees of £1 11s 6d a term. My sister hated her time at Latymer because she had transferred from Enfield County School and found the work much more demanding at Latymer and never really caught up. She should really have gone into the the third year but was placed in the fourth year instead.

My first form room was a wooden hut behind the caretakers house heated by a very inefficient wood burning stove.² I did not have a lot of contact with Dickie Ashworth but I do remember one morning in assembly that a boy called Oxley had jumped from near the bottom of the form to about half way up as a result of the end of year examinations and Dickie said "Oxley stand on your chair so we can all see you." He was very keen that success should be publicly acknowledged. I went to his funeral in the Edmonton cemetery opposite United Dairies. There was also a darker side to his character. My brother in law Peter Priest told me that one day he was walking down the corridor when Dickie was approaching from the opposite direction and said to him for no obvious reason "Priest I'm going to hit you." and proceeded to slap him sharply round the face. Peter was completely nonplussed and never found out what the punishment was for.

In 1928 when the Great Hall was opened by The Duke and Duchess of York I sang some duets with a boy called Ron Barrass to keep the audience entertained while the royal party went on a tour of the new extensions. Apart from the Great Hall and the classrooms the really important addition was a gymnasium, which is now the Jones Lecture

Theatre, that replaced a corrugated iron structure near the North Block.

The teacher who stands out for me was Joe Morris. He was an enthusiast about everything. He would come to the Saturday morning football, shout encouragement during cross country races and he was also an excellent classroom teacher. I went on a walking holiday in Austria that he organised. We took a train to Cologne and then went up the Rhine to Wiesbaden and then walked through the Bavarian Alps to Innsbruck staying at youth hostels and in private homes. The total cost was £6 10 shillings for a fortnight's holiday.

Mr Davies was rather a forbidding character, although he did once congratulate me in assembly for scoring a very long range goal in a soccer match. It was really more of a hopeful punt that dipped in under the crossbar. The year that I left I received six of the best from him because a boy called Kerr and myself had been left alone in a classroom while the rest of the form did their Matriculation arithmetic. To amuse ourselves we began gently kicking a tennis ball backwards and forwards and succeeded in annoying Mr Muirhead³ who was teaching in the classroom below. Mr Muirhead sent us to report to Mr Davies who without even inquiring into what had happened caned us both. I thought it rather a stupid thing to do on his part for a very trivial offence.

Apart from football my other main sporting interest was athletics. After I left, I joined Southgate Harriers and used to train on the cinder track at Broomfield Park. At these sessions there was another Old Latymerian Charlie Oades⁴ who was an international standard quarter miler. He was training with another athlete and they were running along throwing a rugby ball to each other when Charlie was hit by a stray javelin that penetrated his right shoulder and came out the other side. He would probably have been killed if he had not twisted away at the last moment

when he saw it coming. I believe that this incident ended his athletics career. Swimming was also a very important sport within the school and we all used to use the Knights Lane baths at least once a week. At the first swimming gala that I attended, Professor Pickard who had just left Latymer and was an outstanding swimmer and later became a dental surgeon and Chairman of Governors, gave a demonstration of the front crawl. On the way back to school we would often buy a penny bun at the bakers, despite strict orders that we should return directly to Latymer, although swimming 60 lengths to complete a mile meant that I was often late anyway.



Speech day for 1927 with prizes being presented by the Bishop of St Albans. This was the last speech day held in the Methodist Central Hall, Fore Street. Note the white dress of the girl on the left. These were compulsory for speech day. The younger boys of course are wearing shorts.

The school field then was only about a third of its present size and could only accommodate a 330 yard running track. Therefore for football we used to use a pitch at the eastern junction of Church Street and Haselbury Road that is now covered by a housing estate.

Like the great majority of my contemporaries I left at the end of my 5th year having matriculated and through a connection of my father's I became an articled clerk and 5 years later qualified as a solicitor

Two years after qualifying as a solicitor the Second World War broke out and Ken Gooch volunteered for the RAF where he flew 67 missions over France and Germany for Bomber Command and was awarded the DFC and Bar. After the war he returned to legal practice

co-founding the well known local firm of Barker, Gooch and Swailes and in 1968 became Secretary to the Trustees of the Latymer Foundation retiring at the age of 70 in 1984 although he continues to work as a part time legal consultant. Unlike most of those interviewed Ken Gooch had virtually no contact with Latymer for 30 years after leaving until he began his work for the Trustees.

NOTES

1. Marie Spurgeon was the sister of Tom Spurgeon who taught metalwork at Latymer from 1948 to 1961. He died in 1994.
2. These huts were built in 1918 to help cope with the expansion of pupil numbers and were also used as a canteen.
3. Arnold Muirhead taught Latin from 1928 to 1946. The Punishment Book entry for this incident shows that Ken Gooch received four strokes of the cane for this offence. Entries indicate that caning was not a frequent practice at Latymer and that the number of entries for a single year rarely exceeded twelve. In some schools this number would be reached in a single day. The last entry in the Punishment Book is for 1968.
4. Whether this incident did finish the athletics career of Charlie Oades is unclear. Having left in 1933 at the age of 16 he went on to win the quarter mile at the 1936 Middlesex Amateur Athletics Championship. I would welcome any further information.
5. Professor H.M.Pickard was Chairman of Governors 1981-83.

Jack Embleton, 1927-33

My father Henry Embleton was born in Nelson Road Edmonton and attended the Old Latymer in Church Street under Dr Dolbe although being at the Lower School he was under Mr Shearer.¹ He began when he was about 9 in 1889 and left when he was 14 to become an apprentice goldsmith. His main memory of Dr Dolbe was as a keen disciplinarian who only used to appear in the Lower School in order to cane miscreants.

I went to St James Church of England School and sat my scholarship examination at the Central Hall Edmonton. At that time there were only about 25% scholarships and the rest were fee payers although they still had to take an entrance test that was less difficult than the scholarship test. The first day that I arrived at Latymer it was an awe inspiring spectacle having come from a tiny primary school. Dickie Ashworth greeted us and then Mr Gibbs² called our names out allocating us to a form and a teacher. My first form teacher was Irene Richards who was a lovable person and an outstanding teacher. I enjoyed sport and played for the school soccer and cricket teams that were organised by George Briscoe.³ I remember him saying to me once "You're not playing next Saturday Embleton because I know you can play and I'm going to give — a chance." I was very aggrieved at that. In the lower forms we used to play against the local elementary schools like Croyland Road, Brettenham, Raglan, Eldon Road and Montagu Road. We called them rough schools. Only when we got to the 1st and 2nd XI did we play the other grammar schools like Stationers, Enfield Grammar, St Ignatius, which was then behind the Spurs ground and Woodhouse in Finchley. I scored 10 goals in a match against Trinity⁴ and their headmaster rang up Mr Davies to tell us to bring our 2nd XI next time.

The outstanding teacher when I was there was Joe Morris who really cared about me as a person and proved to be a great friend. "Chumps" was a superb teacher with a tremendous grasp of grammar and literature.

He used to come into the classroom and immediately fire at us spelling questions like "how do you spell diarrhoea?" He really kept us on our toes. I also enjoyed being taught by 'Dixie' Dean⁵ although the nickname was very misleading as he was only half the size of the Everton centre forward and as I discovered in Staff School matches was easy to knock off the ball. I remember being taken in 1929 on a visit to Croydon airport to be shown about modern aircraft design. Some of the pilots used to come in open cockpits on the service from France and looked just about frozen. This was long before the opening of Heathrow.

Jack Embleton stayed on into the sixth form where he took Geography and Mathematics. After serving in the RAF in the Second World War he became an accountant with Dalgetys where he stayed until retirement. His sports training under George Briscoe has stood him in good stead as he still plays tennis regularly at the age of 78.

NOTES

1. Memory is fallible. William Shearer had taught at Merchant Taylor's School, Crosby before coming to Latymer. Perhaps Henry Embleton meant Joseph Boyce who ran the Lower School for an extraordinary 42 years having already taught with Dr Dolbe at St Thomas's Charterhouse for 10 years and only finally retired with the closure of the Church Street school.

2. Arthur Gibbs taught English from 1912 to 1931 and for the last 2 years was the deputy headmaster.

3. George Briscoe was the first head of 'Physical Culture' from 1921 to 1955.

4. Trinity Grammar School, Wood Green.

5. Ralph Dean taught physics at Latymer for 31 years from 1929 to 1960.

Dick Hibberd, 1928-35

My stepfather Fred Horton was at Latymer under Mr Shearer from 1906 to 1909 and he felt that the Headmaster Mr Shearer had been very badly treated by the trustees. The school had been allowed to become very badly run down and Mr Shearer lost heart with the endless delay and failure to act. His career was finished by the lack of support that he received and a weakness for drink which made him even less employable having been head of a school that had failed. My stepfather felt that Mr Ashworth and Dr Dolbe, who were the two headmasters either side of Shearer had been very publicly honoured but that Shearer's qualities had been overlooked. When the Church Street building closed someone wrote on the wall outside ICHABOD which I think means "thy glory hath departed." My stepfather left at the time that the building was being pulled down and became a commercial artist in the City. I believe that Mr Shearer was involved in a fatal bicycle accident in Chingford and that his drink habit may have contributed to the accident.

My own father, Louis Hibberd, had worked as an accountant for Edmonton District Council but shortly after the First World War he joined with his younger brother to set up "Hibberds the Bakers" who became a well known Edmonton company. My father died shortly after

this and his younger brother bought out what had become my mother's share. About four years later my mother married Fred Horton. I was sent to a small preparatory school at the Lamb's Institute run by a Miss Lewis who knew Mr Ashworth and many of the pupils seemed to go on to Latymer.¹ I remember there was a rival prep school further down Church Street opposite Victoria Road run by a Mrs Geater. Although I won a scholarship I did not take it up because my mother felt it would be kinder to leave it to someone who needed it more. The fees were £1 11s 6d per term.

My first form teacher was Eddie Knight. He was firm but fair and an excellent teacher. Mr Champion² when he first taught us came into the classroom looking very fierce and we sat there nervously as he glared around. He then wrote on the black board "They call me Chumps." That really broke the ice and he proved to be a wonderful English teacher. I was always impressed by the courtesy that he showed to the cleaning ladies at a time when the Masters rarely even spoke to the school ancillary staff. He

later went on to become headmaster of Edmonton County School. Joe Morris was a very forceful personality who had real mastery of his subject and made every lesson interesting and had a way of imparting the information that made it stick although he could be very sarcastic



The south end of the school in 1932. The covered walkway leads to the old gymnasium now the Jones Memorial Lecture Theatre. The car is probably a Morris Cowley and may have belonged to Jack Hurst who owned one at the time.

and that put some pupils off. Bill Brace,³ the metalwork master was a real character. He owned a Bull Nose Morris and at the end of the Summer term a group of boys would gather to watch him lift that heavy engine out of the car to overhaul it. He was a real bruiser and would heave that huge engine out of the car single handed. He also built a boat in the metal work room and then found it was too big to get out and the window had to be removed although it was always suspected he knew that the boat was too big right from the start. When he retired, I understand that, he not only built his own bungalow in Wales but he made his own tools such as a shovel and pick before he started.

The school orchestra in those days was a bit of a joke. If you had a violin you were 'in' which led to an orchestra of about 40 violins and little else. Ronnie Cunliffe⁴ was an outstanding musician but he suffered ill health due to a shrapnel wound in the Great War which meant that sometimes he could not teach. A number of boys used to go round to his flat in Church Street for musical suppers at which he once claimed that any half competent musician could compose one of the popular dance tunes of the day. One of the boys challenged him to prove this and having settled on the title 'Make Believe' he produced a very catchy little tune writing it on manuscript paper, as there was no piano in the room. It was scored for both hands. He never had a permanent position at Latymer and when the school closed at the time of evacuation there was not a place for him. He fell upon hard times and sometime during the war he gassed himself. I think that he had been very badly affected by his wounds in the First World War.

I remember one speech day in about 1932 when the orchestra played a terrible version of Eine Kleine Nachtmusik conducted by Dr Howard that seemed to go on for ever. The audience were desperate for it to finish. In my first year the Great Hall was opened by the Duke and Duchess of York although there was not enough room for the first form in the Great Hall and we lined Haselbury Road. There was absolute silence as all the dignitaries arrived but as Mr and Mrs Ashworth stepped

on to the stage there was a great cheer from the pupils that was public endorsement of their affection for him. I was only there for one term before he died yet he made a very deep impression on me. I can still remember him using the Robert Louis Stevenson Vailima prayers and can still recite a number of them from memory. His death was a terrible shock but in the next copy of the school magazine there was a photograph of him and below it was inscribed the words "to live on in the hearts of those we love is not to die."⁵ When there was the Staff versus School cricket match Dickie as he went out to bat would grab the cap off the head of the nearest boy. This was considered such an honour that some boys used to sit close to him in the hope that their cap would be taken. No one laughed at him for this eccentricity yet I cannot imagine a headmaster getting away with it today.

NOTES

1. When Latymer was opened on the Haselbury Road site in 1910 there was a preparatory class that was run by Miss Lewis. In 1919 due to pressure on space the 'Latymer Preparatory School' was transferred to Lamb's Institute and continued to wear the Latymer crest. In 1923 the connection was formally severed following complaints from rival local prep schools. It was Mrs Geater who led the opposition to the Latymer preparatory school. By the time that Dick Hibberd attended it was called the Edmonton Preparatory School.
2. Harold Champion was at Latymer from 1921 to 1943 and for his last 12 years was deputy headmaster.
3. Bill Brace taught woodwork and metalwork at Latymer for 33 years from 1930 to 1963 and was by all accounts a plain spoken character as well as a first rate craftsman.
4. Ronald Cunliffe taught at Latymer from 1927 to 1941 and was the composer of the music for the school song.
5. The death of Richard Ashworth at the age of 59 from pneumonia was both sudden and unexpected and a devastating blow to staff and pupils alike.

Owen Mortimer, 1929-35

I was born in Finsbury Park and my family moved to Enfield in 1925. There I attended Lavender Road School and took the scholarship examination that was held at Enfield Grammar school and managed to come seventh in the whole of Enfield. I was destined to go to Enfield Grammar School but my father worked for Middlesex County Council and he sought the advice of the chief education officer Sir Brian Gott¹ who said that he thought Latymer was a better school and as my parents were keen for me to go to a co-educational school the decision was quickly made that I should go to Latymer. My earliest memory is of going to the school in July in order to be measured for a blazer which was supplied by Fred Wade of Fore Street Edmonton. On the September day that I started I caught the train from Enfield to Lower Edmonton and as I arrived at the station a train pulled in from Liverpool street and a gentleman who alighted from it walked up Church Street in front of me. To my surprise I followed him into Latymer. I later learnt that it was Percy Blackwell and that it was also his first day at the school. Mr V.S.E. Davies our headmaster also started on that day as well.²

My main extra curricular interest was in craft work and Miss Warne³ would take an after school class in leather work and other crafts as well as providing us with an after school tea at the end of term. Her cakes and trifle were superb. In the 4th form I won a scholarship to attend Hornsey School of Art on Saturday mornings and after attending for 2 years was offered a full time scholarship but my parents felt that art work was too precarious. This was at the time of the depression and everybody wanted a "safe" job.

In my 2nd year I remember attending a Speech Day at which I wore a new light brown suit that had been made for me by my father's tailor. Jack Hurst⁴ was there at the side of the stage ushering on the prizewinners and he looked at me and said "It looks as if you're going

to the races Mortimer!" I didn't realise that you were meant to wear a dark suit on a formal occasion. Jack Hurst was my form master in 3P (Physics) and was a very likeable teacher but it was very easy to get him off the subject by mentioning cricket and sometimes that would be the end of the lesson as far as physics was concerned. 'Dixie' Dean taught us physics in the 3rd and 4th forms and was an outstanding teacher as well as being my form master in 4P. These great times continued in 5 Sc (Sc for Science) when we had Percy 'Inky' Blackwell as our form teacher. He was the most wonderful teacher of both chemistry and maths. The enjoyment of this year was increased by my becoming interested in Royce Holland of 5G (G for German) who was to become my future wife. My other main extra curricular interest, apart from my craft work with Miss Warne was woodwork with Mr Binks⁵ and metalwork with Bill Brace which I did on sports afternoons. During this time I made various pieces of furniture in oak and mahogany and an aluminium scanning disc for that type of very early Baird television that Jack Hurst was making.

When I left I Latymer I joined the Public Assistance Department of Middlesex County Council but did not enjoy it very much as I really wanted to be an architect or a surveyor. With the outbreak of war I was called up and joined the RAF where I trained as a fitter armourer. For the next 5 years I served in Norfolk, South Africa, Egypt, Iraq and Italy. Meanwhile I had married Royce partly because married men only had to complete 3 years service while for single men it was 4. I was discharged a few days before Christmas 1945 and went back to Middlesex where I became a quantity surveyor. Before Middlesex was disbanded in 1963 I joined Edmonton Borough Council which was absorbed into Enfield in 1964. I was unhappy with this and left for Waltham Forest in 1967 where I was Senior Quantity Surveyor and stayed until I retired in 1982.

NOTES

1. Sir Brian Gott Chief Education Officer for Middlesex was a close friend of Richard Ashworth and had been the key supporter for the building of a new Latymer school on the Haselbury Road site.

2. After the sudden death of Richard Ashworth Jimmy North the deputy headmaster took over as acting head until the appointment of Victor Davies.

3. Dorothy Warne taught English from 1928 to 1968.

4. Jack Hurst taught physics at Latymer for an astonishing 46 years from 1927 to 1973. His record of service is unsurpassed.

5. Henry Binks taught woodwork at Latymer from 1920 to 1937.



At the Sports Day finishing line in 1932. The 'Tin Tab' and the wooden canteen were demolished in 1965 to make way for the present gymnasium.

Douglas Bird, 1930-36

I was born in a terraced house half a mile to the south of the school just off Victoria Road. The area between the school and Victoria Road was mainly allotments and rough ground. A hedged pathway ran from Victoria Road to Haselbury Road and for obvious reasons it was known as Lover's Lane. Cars were very rare in the district and certainly nobody in our street owned one.¹ The Hyde estate was built over this area in the early 1920s.

I was the odd one out in my family because I read avidly although there were few books in the house. I accelerated through the forms at Croyland Road Elementary School where, when I was about 8 I was encouraged by my teachers to ask my father to subscribe for a set of the Waverley Book of Knowledge which an encyclopaedia salesman was hawking around the schools. He readily paid up the then large sum of half crown a week and this opened up an entirely new world for me. At the age of 10 I was able to get a ticket for the library in Fore Street although in those days it was not open format and instead the lists of titles were available from which you made your choice and you then went to a 'cubby hole' where there was a teller's screen and the book was supplied. About a year later a new library was opened with an open format which was heaven for me because I could now browse at my leisure.

I can't remember taking an entrance test for Latymer, but I must have done because I was offered a scholarship. When the letter arrived my parents were a bit nonplussed because although they were in favour of the principle of education they had reservations about committing me to school until I was 16 and where it might lead. It was simply something that had not happened in my family, or for that matter in the street, before. All three of us went to see Ernest Saunders the headmaster of Croyland Road whose advice was greatly valued. When he raised the possibility that I might become a bank clerk as a result of going to Latymer that sealed it as far as my father was concerned.²

In my first year I was placed in for 1B but at the end of the year I went into Q2 which was the quick form that took matriculation in four years. One of the earliest incidents that I remember was when Percy Blackwell,³ whom I liked on the whole, took me and I misspelt the word "Wednesday". His rather cutting response was "If you could talk properly then you would be able to spell properly." That stung, although I suppose that I must have spoken with a strong Edmonton accent at the time. The other teacher who stood out for me was Bill Brace who taught woodwork but more importantly gave me a lot of encouragement with my athletics. I was the School Captain for Athletics and Swimming and after each race or training session he would vigorously massage my legs until the sweat dripped from his face and mingled with the rubbing oils and he would always say the same thing; "How's your muscles boy?" The only prize that I won was for Physical Education.

In many ways Latymer came as a culture shock to me coming from one of the poorer parts of Edmonton and meeting for the first time affluent middle class children from Winchmore Hill and Bush Hill Park. I still remember my astonishment at my first form Christmas party when so many boys appeared not only in party suits but some wearing patent leather dance pumps.⁴ I was particularly influenced by Ronnie Cunliffe and Maisie Cobbie. Drama and music have filled much of my leisure time since and I am still actively involved.

Having taken my Schools Certificate at the age of 15 I was appalled at the prospect of having to leave and pointed out to my father that he had signed a piece of paper agreeing to keep me at Latymer until I was sixteen.⁵ Generously he allowed me to stay on. At 14 I had won a county scholarship for £13 which covered things like school uniform and was a great help to my father. At 15 I went into the sixth form where I studied chemistry, physics and pure and applied mathematics. There were only about 10 scientists in the sixth form and the teaching

groups were tiny. For example in applied mathematics I was the only pupil and had a personal tutor in Dr Howard.⁶ In the sixth form I was summoned to Mr Davies' office where he told me that I was to be made a prefect. I can't really remember what the duties were but they were not very onerous. For me V.S.E. Davies was the headmaster, a remote but to me benevolent figure who presided over the tremendous expansion of the school⁷ and then successfully saw Latymer through the very trying times of the Second World War and evacuation. He may not have had the personal warmth of Richard Ashworth or the high profile of Trevor Jones but his achievement should not be underestimated.

The next problem was what to do once I had finished in the sixth form having taken my Higher Schools Certificate. There was no question of my going on to university as there was no scholarship or grant available. In fact I think that very few people did go on to university although some did sit the Higher Civil Service Examinations⁸ or went on to teacher training college. My father was very keen that I get a safe job like he had as a Post Office telephone lines foreman. We spoke to the careers master William Cunliffe who submitted my name and particulars to the Headmaster's Employment Bureau and they arranged an interview with an insurance company. With astonishing naivety I turned this down as I had accepted an engineering apprenticeship with the Post Office. I found the tasks demanded of me very straight forward and in the summer of 1937 decided to try to read for an engineering degree at Northampton Polytechnic which later became City University. In fact I was not to complete my studies because I was called up into the army 3 days after war broke out and served until 1946 mostly in the Far East, finishing with the rank of Major.

After the war I rejoined the Post Office and took the first available examination into management grades and after a few years became a tutor at one of the first in house Management Schools within the structure of the Engineering Training College and then joined the Atomic Energy Authority with a similar remit. In the middle 1960s I transferred to the Board of Trade working in London and Liverpool on projects offering government financial support to industry. In 1969 I

rejoined the Post Office and became an Executive Member of the Scottish Telecommunications Board.

NOTES

1. Douglas Bird adds that tradesmen used horse and cart extensively and particularly notable were the black plumed horses of Blake and Horlock the undertakers. A blacksmith's forge was still in use at The Town Road end of New Road Hill and briefly co-existed with the cinema that succeeded the Edmonton Music Hall on the Tottenham side of the hill.
2. Leavers records indicate that leaving at 16 and becoming a bank clerk or similar type of occupation was very much typical for the Latymer pupil of the inter war years.
3. Percy Blackwell having been appointed in 1929 had only been at Latymer a year when this incident occurred. He later became Head of Science and retired in 1960.
4. A typical unskilled or semi-skilled wage in the 1930s was £3-10s. Douglas Bird remembers that his mother had £3 a week to keep the house; rent, fuel, clothing, food etc and that she knitted all his socks and sweaters, made pyjamas, vests and shirts and his sister's dresses. Unlike many of his Edmonton contemporaries he was not 'ragged'.
5. Between the wars it was unusual to stay on into the sixth form at Latymer. It was then even more unusual to go on to university. Mandatory grants for degree courses were still almost thirty years in the future.
6. Anecdotal evidence would suggest that this was not unusual given the small size of the sixth form. From the time of Dr Dolbe up to the expansion of the mid 1920s Latymer enjoyed a very favourable teacher pupil ratio.
7. The crucial decisions concerning the expansion of the school has been taken under Richard Ashworth and by the time that Victor Davies became headmaster in 1929 the building programme had almost been completed.
8. For the great majority of pupils doing well in the Higher Civil Service Examinations was a much more realistic ambition than going on to university. One of the key selling points of the school as long ago as the early 1870s at the beginning of the reign of Dr Dolbe was the success of Latymer pupils in the various civil service and diplomatic service examinations.

May Bennett (née Munns), 1933-40

Until I was ten years old I lived in Tottenham but my family moved to 27 Church Street¹ Edmonton when I was 10 and I went to All Saints' Girls' Elementary School. In 1933 I won a scholarship to Latymer. First of all we sat an intelligence test. I will always remember the first question. It was "how many legs does a three legged stool have?" We then went on to sit further tests in English and number work at Edmonton County School. Entry to Latymer was very competitive and in my year only two other pupils from All Saints' were accepted.

Edmonton at this time was undergoing a period of expansion. The Hyde estate opposite the school had just been completed and the part nearest Lower Edmonton Station was mainly inhabited by first and second generation East Enders who had moved there from the Bethnal Green area to take to take advantage of the 2d workman's fare. Edmonton Green was a lively bustling place, a costermongers' market lit in the winter by acetylene flares and full of characters. The shops that I remember most clearly were Liptons Groceries and Dales Furniture Store. Living in Church Street though, we only had to walk down Latymer Road a little way and we were in open countryside and towards the Cambridge Road it was fields and hedges up to Raglan primary school.

On entry to Latymer we were streamed straight away with the cleverest going into the quick form with the intention that they matriculate after 4 years and then proceed to the sixth form to take their Higher Schools Certificate a year early so they could the spend the next year taking the scholarship examinations for Oxford and Cambridge. Q1,1B and 1C took French as their modern language 1D and 1E took German and 1G took Spanish. I was aware that quite a lot of children were accepted for the school by passing a less rigorous examination but their parents could afford to pay fees, although all parents who could afford to pay fees were

required to.² These children tended to go into Remove where they repeated a year of their schooling.

Being interested in sport, I particularly looked forward to field days. There were ten of these in the year and really they were house match days with 5 in the Autumn and Winter terms and 5 in the Summer term. They took place over a whole afternoon and virtually every body was involved. House rivalry was intense and this was a time when two new houses Ashworth and Dolbe had only just been created.

When I was a pupil, Foundation Day was quite a low key affair and did not involve the service at All Saints' Church and the lunch afterwards. Instead Mr Davies, the Headmaster would give a slightly longer assembly explaining about Edward Latymer and his charitable acts. It was not until the time of Dr Jones in the late 1950s that it became the large scale formal affair that it is today with an invited speaker.³ To make up for this though we had a separate Junior and Senior Speech Day. This meant that everybody was able to go to a speech day and we had two afternoons off as a bonus.

Although the music was not of the standard that it is today we had an excellent choir in the 1930s run by Ronnie Cunliffe which was good enough to be broadcast by the BBC. Initially he would only allow boys in but when we were evacuated he relented and allowed girls in as well. As well as writing the music to the school song Ronnie Cunliffe would play us into and out of morning assembly which for many of us was the only real opportunity that we had to listen to classical music and formed the basis of a later love of music. He would also play a piece for musical appreciation that ranged from 'Kitten on the Keys' to the standard classics. He was a fine musician who inspired in many of us a love of music that has remained. Many of us felt that he was treated very badly when he was made redundant because of poor health. Maisie Cobbie⁴

was also a great inspiration with her beautiful school productions. In my first year it was 'Make Believe' followed by a marvellous Macbeth, the name part being taken by Edward Burnham who later won the Bancroft gold medal at RADA. Quite unknown to Maisie we would sneak up into the back gallery of the Great Hall and secretly watch the rehearsals. In my fifth year we were involved with the production of some Greek plays including Iphigenia in Tauris with Ruth Tait in the title role and me playing the Goddess Athena. These productions were completely separate from the music department and were rather high minded. They were a way of introducing us to culture and were not light or frivolous pieces.

Sport was very important at Latymer although there was very little timetabled PE. The boys played football in winter and cricket in summer while the girls played netball in the first year, hockey in the second and after that they could choose, although the Q form, because of academic pressure only had one period of PE a week. A number of people in the Q form felt that they had missed out on important parts of school life because of the pressure to complete matriculation in 4 years. There was intense sporting competition between the local grammar schools and we had regular Saturday morning fixtures. It was during my time in the 1930s that sports day became a much more serious affair than it had been under Dickie

Ashworth. Out went the egg and spoon races and the slow bicycle races and it became much more of an athletics event with intense competition between the houses, although being held on a Saturday it was still a social event. Only the men were allowed to be officials so the ladies were able to grace the occasion wearing their finery!

In 1934 the uniform for the girls changed from a box pleated gym type tunic to a plain square necked navy blue gym slip with a pale blue blouse and a girdle worn about the middle to tie it in. We also wore long black wool stockings, a dark blue wool blazer, navy knickers and a wide brimmed blue velour hat. I strongly disliked the hat and remember having to wear it even when I was an evacuee in the upper sixth at Clacton. The only time I did not wear it I bumped into Mr Davies who was cycling along the front. The boys wore short trousers in the first and second year but as time progressed it became more common for them to start in long trousers and of course it was obligatory for them to wear a school cap

right up until the last day that they left the sixth form. In about 1948 the girls velour hat became a beret and then sometime in the 1950s it fell into disuse along with the school cap.

Assembly was held every day and took the form of a brief religious



A. BRADY, D. HAYNES, C. COX, C. RUSSELL (Capt.), L. ROPER, P. MARTIN, N. ROBINSON, C. P. RICH, D. BAILEY, JOAN HOLLYWOOD, VIVIENNE MARTIN, EILEEN WELCH, R. BRADSHAW, R. ASTON, ESSIE HARDIMAN, JOAN KINGHAM, BETTY TURNER, PAMELA HIRON, GLADYS BOND (Capt.), JOAN LEECH, BERYL LATTER, JOAN CLARK, BARBARA WRIGHT.

Prefects 1937-38. From Latymer magazine.

service led by Mr Davies with a prefect reading the lesson. There would be three prayers with the Lords Prayer in the middle with music from Ronnie Cunliffe and a sung amen. All pupils were issued with a hymn book when they entered the school and they had to take it down to every assembly and woe betide you if you forgot it. It was not Mr Davies' habit to address the school except on special occasions.

The great out of school activity for the year was going on the annual camp, a practice that started with Joe Morris ('Jammy' to all the pupils) although there were separate camps for the girls and boys. The girls camps were organised by Miss Brown, Miss Williamson and Miss Heathfield. In the second year we went to Alton in Hampshire while the boys went to Arran. I also remember a visit to Zermatt in Switzerland for the boys while the girls had a week in Paris that cost ten pounds which was a lot of money then. We also had exchange visits with France and Germany and this was in the 1930s.

After the school camp at Hall Sands, South Devon in 1939 I went on holiday to Oxfordshire where I heard Mr Neville Chamberlain's broadcast declaring war on Nazi Germany. As a result I was not evacuated with the main body of the school. On the walk to Silver Street station the children sang a parody of the school that Ronnie Cunliffe had written.

*Slog it Latymer good and strong, Chalfont Road is five miles long,
Past and present and those to be, Why am I an evacuee?
Packs and rucksacks sweltering under, On the road to where in thunder,
Sing it Latymer good and strong, Left foot, right foot, biff, bang, bong.*

As one of the composers of the school song I suppose he was entitled to parody it.

I followed them to Clacton about a week later and stayed with a friend who had been at Tottenham High School. The allocation of children to families was very arbitrary and some of them were just taken around the back streets of Clacton and families were asked "how many have you

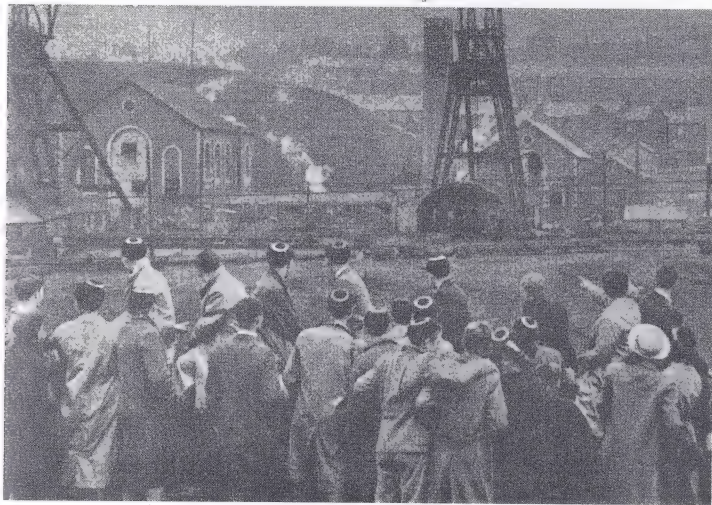
got and can you take another one?" A friend of mine stayed with the rag and bone man and had a bed full of bugs. On the wall was the legend, "Come unto me, and I will give you rest."

It was very pleasant staying in Clacton for the first part of the year. It was a holiday resort and we had lovely weather and a number of us would swim in the sea every day a practice that I kept that up until 1st November although later it was a very cold winter and the sea froze at the edges. After a few weeks we had to leave the hotel in which we were billeted because the owner found that on the allowance paid by the government he was out of pocket. Four of us were transferred to a boarding house where we were very well looked after by the housekeeper Agnes. Because it was a boarding house we had the set meals which were on a 2 week rotation so we always knew what we would have in advance. As growing girls we ate the owner out of house and home and the pittance that they were given by the government did not cover our food bills. We therefore moved to a poorer home where Mrs Kinge looked after us like a mother. Despite being poor we never went short of anything and every day there would be a pile of sandwiches and cake in the kitchen with a blazing fire to welcome us back. She was one of the kindest people that I have ever known. Many of us found that it was in the poorest homes that we had the warmest welcome.

In the evenings some of us would go to the Latymer Clubhouse organised by Joe Morris and John Goodson. We were always chaperoned back by the the staff in convoys particularly if it was dark. Because the numbers from the original houses were very uneven we had a new house system named after the states of ancient Greece, Athens, Sparta and Corinth.

After we had been in Clacton about 2 terms a German bomber dropped a couple of sea mines and then crashed near to the town although I don't think that there were any casualties on the ground. Both airman were killed though, and people mourned their death as a waste of young lives and they were buried in a local cemetery. This happened in April

1940 during the period of the Phoney War when there was still a feeling of unreality about the conflict. This convinced those in charge that Clacton was not safe and a decision was made to evacuate to Tonypandy. We had one train to take us the whole way and the journey took all day. A few people tried to scare us by saying that it was where the miners strike had been and that we would not be welcome. They could not have been more mistaken. Ronnie Cunliffe had insisted that we learnt the Welsh national anthem in Welsh and he taught us to sing it through phonetics. Our first performance made a tremendous impact and we were praised for the purity of our accents although we did not know what we were singing. When we arrived we walked to a community centre where tea was waiting for us. On the way we were accompanied by the town band and the route was lined with local people who were cheering us on. Much of this tremendous welcome was due to the efforts of George Thomas⁵ and a local Methodist minister Cyril Gwyther. Virtually all of us who went to church, attended the Methodist Central Hall, whatever our denominations were in Edmonton.



Latymer pupils at a coalmine outside Tonypandy. Only the boys were allowed to go down the mine.

Everyone seemed to be willing to take evacuees and some people took as many as 6 although the houses were very small. The miners tended to have large families. Mrs Davies my foster mother was the eldest of 16 children and her great friend Mrs Hughes was the eldest of 24. As a consequence Mrs Hughes son was an uncle to many nieces and nephews who were a lot older than him. My friend Karin was billeted with a Dr Jones who was known as 'Jones the bath' because he was unusual in having a bath in his house. My foster family could not have been kinder hosts. My foster father had been out of work for many years and had become demoralised and would sit in his chair all day and sleep. He had 6 fingers on each hand which was not uncommon in the Rhondda, and it was a strange sensation shaking hands with him. Although the environment was filthy because of the coal dust inside the houses were spotless.

We shared the building of Tonypandy Secondary (Grammar) School although our classes were taught separately from the host school and we were still following the examination courses that we had started in Edmonton. When we were taking our German examination for Higher Schools Certificate the air raid warning sounded and we were sent up the mountain side to wait in a little cottage until the 'all clear' signal. This took several hours and we were placed on our honour not to discuss the paper. I left at the end of the Summer term of 1940 and returned to Edmonton in time to watch the 'Dog fights' overhead of the Battle of Britain and experience the night bombing that followed.

After leaving Latymer I went in 1940 to Chelsea College of Physical Education because I wanted to be within commuting distance of Edmonton. Ironically with the start of the war the college was evacuated to Borth, near Aberystwyth in West Wales. In 1943 I was invited by Mr Davies to join the staff at Latymer. I was delighted to teach PE at my old school and for my first year could not believe that I was being paid to do something that I enjoyed so much.

May Bennett taught PE at Latymer from 1943 to 1959 when she left to head the Oxfordshire schools physiotherapy service. In 1970 she

returned to Latymer as Senior Mistress and retired in 1981.

NOTES

1. Also known as Millfield House where Mrs Geater had at one time run a private school. The houses along this part of Church Street have been demolished and the site is now part of the Beechwood Mews development.

2. The fee paying pupils still had to pass an entrance examination although this was considerably less demanding than the scholarship test.

3. Those who think that historical detail is important are likely to agree that Founders Day should be held on November 1st, the day of the year when Edward Latymer ordered that the poor boys of Edmonton should receive their clothing. Those who feel that the chances of good weather are more

important than historical detail, are likely to be satisfied with a date in late May close to Ascension Day when he ordered the gift to be repeated.

4. Maisie Cobbie taught drama and speech at Latymer from 1927 to 1944 where having established a national reputation she became one of the earliest of the new breed of advisers deemed necessary as a result of the 1944 Education Act. She later worked for the London County Council and the ILEA as well as lecturing for the British Council. Probably more than any other individual she is responsible for the high profile that drama has in English schools.

5. George Thomas. Born in 1909 and educated at University College, Southampton he taught in the East End of London before returning to Wales to teach in Tonypandy where he was one of the key figures in welcoming the Latymer evacuees. He became an MP for Cardiff in the Labour landslide of 1945 and was a member of the 1964 and 1974 Labour governments becoming Speaker in 1976 and Viscount Tonypandy in 1983. As a Viscount rather than a mere Life Peer he was the last person to be granted a hereditary peerage.



Richard Ashworth getting stuck in as a soccer referee. It is difficult to imagine a modern headteacher of a high profile school being so actively involved in pupil activities. The current expectation that headteachers should be financial experts, human resource managers, management gurus as well as pedagogic and educational experts can make meeting a child an unusual and unnerving experience.

Mary Cullimore

Mary Cullimore was appointed to teach geography at Latymer in January 1939 and left in 1959.

I was born in Hornsey in 1903 and attended what was then Glendale Grammar School in Wood Green and I then spent two years at University College, Reading followed by a year at University College, London studying Geography and Geology. I taught in Barnsley for 5 years and Southampton for 9 and at the end of that period I was appointed to the staff at Latymer.

The headmaster for most of the time that I was at Latymer was Mr Davies. He was a reserved man, difficult to get to know and seemed to spend most of his time in his office. He was strongly opposed to the promotion of women and seemed to regard them as second class citizens. It was a principle of his not to promote a woman if a man was available for the job. I was told by the Secretary of the Assistant Mistresses Association that Latymer had the worst record in the whole of England for giving responsibility allowances to women. On top of that women were paid on a separate lower pay scale to men¹ and the marriage bar forced women to choose between a husband

or a career. I knew a teacher at Mawnan Smith who was engaged but did not want to get married because she would lose her job. She only married when the restriction was lifted during the war. I particularly remember the marvellous firework displays that Percy Blackwell used to

organise on Guy Fawkes Day after school when it got dark. They stopped in the end because fireworks became so expensive.²

When war was imminent in August 1939 all teachers were told over the radio to report back to their schools and wait for further instructions. A few days later we heard the news that we were to be evacuated and the next morning we assembled at school and about 500 children with a hundred younger brothers and sisters marched down Haselbury Road

to Silver Street Station where we were met by a special train. It was only half way through the journey when we made a stop that Alfred Edwards³ learnt from the driver that we were going to Clacton. When we arrived, we assembled in a building where a 'slave market' was held in which potential foster parents chose the children that they liked the look of. The staff were allocated last of all because nobody wanted grown ups. For this the foster parents were paid 5 shillings a week that later rose to 7s6d. We were not very welcome in Clacton because it was a town that made its living from the holiday business and large numbers of evacuees it was feared, might spoil that trade. We were only accepted

because the alternative was large numbers of expectant mothers. The following day we assembled to hear on the radio the declaration of war. Many of the children though, were kindly treated. One group of 9 children were billeted in a boarding house and every day the proprietor



The evacuees at Clacton on their way to the 'slave market' where they would be chosen by their foster families. Note the ubiquitous and much disliked velour hats for the girls and the 'Just William' caps for the boys.

would prepare them 36 rounds of dripping toast that they loved. One day when there was a birthday, he laid out a modest festive tea to which they responded "where's our dripping toast?" In the January of 1940 Joe Morris and Jack Goodson⁴ rented a house that became the Latymer clubhouse where the children could do prep, read or just entertain themselves. We shared the premises of the the Clacton High School, but they being the residents had the morning and we had the afternoon from one to five. We did games in the morning but it did mean that the children had quite a lot of time on their hands. Those children who were not evacuated did not get any education until the February of 1940 but as the period of the Phoney War came to an end, enough children were drifting back to London to justify re-opening the school. I was one of the teachers who was called back although the children remained in Clacton. It was only when there was either a bombing raid or a German bomber crashed in the town and it was shown to be unsafe that the Latymer children were evacuated to Tonypandy.

In the May of 1940 when the fall of France seemed imminent, it was decided to organise a second evacuation, this time to Cornwall, where



Waiting to be billeted at Clacton.

Alfred Edwards and Percy Blackwell were able to pay a visit in advance so that we knew the sort of area that we were going to. This had not been the case with Clacton. About one hundred pupils, twenty five younger brothers and sisters and seven staff took the train from Paddington. When we reached Newton Abbott in Dorset we heard the news that France had fallen.⁵ We then carried on by train to Redruth where the children had medical checks before travelling by bus to Mawnan Smith. Alfred Edwards had been able to negotiate for the use of the village hall. The main body of the hall was used by the second form, the third years used the billiard room on the strict understanding that they did not touch the billiard table, the fourth years worked on a partitioned platform at the end of the hall and the fifth years, of whom there were only five or six, had the kitchen. The first form were in the Methodist vestry which was just a little way down the road.

For many of the children it was the first time that they had been in the countryside. One boy brought me a piece of green branch and asked me what it was. It was blackberry bramble that he had never seen before. The boys tended to be asked for by the farmers because they could help around the farm planting cabbages or cutting flowers.⁶ The great majority of the children took very well to country life and I think it is significant the number of Latymerians that have settled in the Mawnan Smith area both before and after retirement. I learnt afterwards from the reunion that we had in 1990 that the children in the big houses were made much less welcome than those staying with the cottagers in the village. Two very nice first year girls were billeted in the house of a former headmaster of Eton and they had to live with the servants, although later they were allowed to use the library.

Even down in Cornwall we were not safe from the bombs. Alfred Edwards and Percy Blackwell had joined the homeguard and when they were on duty they saw a German bomber drop landmines by parachute. I woke up to the sound of breaking wood and thought that I had left the light on. In fact it was the moonlight streaming through a hole torn in the roof. Also in the house were three Latymer girls who slept in the same bedroom and the window had blown in covering all of them with

glass although they were unhurt. The second mine hit a brick built bungalow and such was the force of the explosion that there was not enough stone left to build a dog kennel. Only two days previously this had been the billet of two Latymer girls whose parents had moved them because they were not happy with the arrangements. The other near tragedy that we had was when a girl called Patricia Redwood fell ill with appendicitis and the local doctor failed to diagnose it until he brought in a surgeon from Falmouth hospital who said that she must be operated on immediately. There was not time to seek parental permission and the first that her poor mother learnt of it was when she received a telegram where she had been evacuated to in Norfolk stating "Patricia operated on for appendicitis, condition giving cause for concern." Mrs Redwood then had to travel across country to Cornwall. Patricia did survive but she was in hospital for six weeks and her appendix had been gangrenous.

I remember that Maisie Cobbie put on a concert for the village and she asked the pupils to ask their foster parents for a few flowers for the hall. The mass of flowers that arrived had to be seen to be believed. During one performance of the concert the air raid warnings went off in Falmouth and some members of the audience got up to leave but the children performing in the concert did not bat an eyelid. They carried on as if nothing had happened. I thought that they were marvellous.

I was summoned back to London in the Summer of 1941 just in time for some of the heaviest raids of the war although the children remained at Mawnan Smith for another year.

I then taught at Latymer for the remaining four years of the war. The biggest inconvenience was the regular air raid warnings when the children would have to assemble in the corridors until the all clear was sounded. If a class was taking a public examination in the Great Hall then they would have to crouch under their desks although they were given extra time. About four staff and four sixth form boys were at the school every night for firewatching duties. We divided up into three shifts and decided by lots who would do what shift. Only if you did the



Clacton High School.

first shift were you likely to get unbroken sleep and if you slept on the last shift then you would be woken very early by the cleaning ladies and if you were firewatching on the last shift then you would have no break before starting teaching. I was on duty with Joe Morris and Irene Richards⁷ on the night that one of the first V1's came down. The air raid warning sirens had gone off and we were waiting for the all clear which did not come and then hearing what we thought was a low flying plane cut out, we went into the playground, when there was the loudest explosion imaginable. We ran back into the school like rabbits scuttling for their burrow. The next day we heard that one of these new missiles had come down somewhere in Enfield.⁽⁸⁾ One boy told me that after a raid he went back up to his bedroom and found a paving slab on his bed. That brought home to him how close things could be. Some time in 1942 Edmonton County re-opened but as their building had been taken over for war purposes they shared the Latymer premises. The numbers of both schools were so depleted that we were able to use the building at the same time. When the war came to an end a sum of money was allocated to the school to celebrate in what ever way we liked. The money was divided between the forms and they could decide

what to do. My first form were very moderate in their tastes and they chose to spend the morning at the open air swimming pool in Chingford and the afternoon playing games in Epping Forest.

NOTES

1. Female teachers were paid on a separate pay scale that was approximately 10% less than that of their male colleagues. The separate pay scales were abolished in 1961 although the National Association of Schoolmasters fought a vigorous campaign against this.

2. These firework displays were a feature of Latymer life after the Second World War.

3. Alfred Edwards taught at Latymer for 28 years from 1932 to 1960 and for much of this time he was Head Of Modern Languages.

4. Jack Goodson taught geography at Latymer from 1930 to 1947.

5. France surrendered on 22nd June 1940.

6. Flower growing was the most important crop in the Falmouth area.

7. Irene Richards taught history at Latymer from 1918 to 1953.

8. Between June 1944 and March 1945 35 V1 flying bombs hit the Enfield area including 7 in Edmonton. Probably this was either the V1 that hit Baker Street in Enfield on 25th June damaging 800 houses and seriously injuring 12 people or it was the flying bomb that hit Edmonton on 28th June narrowly missing the Ever Ready factory and exploding on waste ground.



The Royal party arriving for the opening of the Great Hall in 1928.

Mrs Ruth Marshall (née Tait), 1933-40

I was born in Finsbury Park but in 1924 my parents moved to 91 Village Road, Enfield from where I attended St Andrews Church of England Elementary School. Unlike most of my contemporaries I was eligible for entry to Latymer because Village Road, despite having an Enfield postal address, lay within the Borough of Edmonton¹ although I still had to pass the scholarship examination.

The teacher who made the deepest impression on me was Harry Griffin² who taught me German from the third year onwards. I thought he looked like Gary Cooper and he was the most wonderful teacher. I also remember Miss Jeffries³ although I did not care for her very much. We regarded her as the power behind the throne in her relations with Mr Davies although most of our information was based on gossip. I also remember, of course, my future husband Steve Marshall⁴ who taught me the physics element of our general science course in the fifth form when he came to the school.

Other staff including John Goodson and Val Abley⁵ also subsequently married former pupils. Eddie Knight was also an outstanding teacher and a nice man although he could seem rather fierce. Being in charge of the North Block he was known as the 'Terror of the North.' Another maths master, called Bate had taught at a rather tough boys school and addressed us all by our surnames, which the girls were not used to and did not like very much. I remember him bellowing at me in a maths lesson "Tait, how do you spell parallelogram?" One tended not to use the christian names of the boys at least until the sixth form.

Arnold Muirhead who taught me Latin for a time was a very erudite and scholarly man but a poor teacher and had little success despite having the cleverest children in the school. He left teaching and went into antique book selling which I think he was much more suited to. Mr Davies was a large figure, very remote and I think rather shy. He

taught us divinity in the first year. I don't think that anyone felt warmly towards him although he commanded respect.

Some children were placed in the Q form, which for some of them including my older sister was a disaster as she was placed under too much pressure. Before I started, my mother went and saw Mr Davies to ask him not to place me in the Q form.

My memory of house activities at Latymer is that they were run entirely by the house captains and the teaching staff had nothing to do with the house system and were not even allocated to a house. Games was not timetabled after the second year and instead, if you wanted to continue with a particular sport, you did this as part of the house competitions. School drama productions were a highlight for me. In my first year I was a child in an A.A.Milne play, in the second year I was one of the apparitions in Macbeth, in the third year I was in the orchestra that played in the intervals for an Italian Renaissance production and in the fourth year I was Lady Golightly in the Emperor's New Clothes. In the fifth year the production was cancelled because the staff went on strike against Maisie Cobbie because they felt she was too demanding and refused to co-operate with the production. In my lower sixth, the last production, before war broke out, was Iphigenia in Tauris, in which I took the name part.

During the Summer of 1939 I was staying with a German speaking family in Basle in Switzerland. I had originally wanted to go to Dresden where I had a boy correspondent, or Hamburg where I had previously had an exchange but my mother would not, in the end let me go to Germany. I had been awarded a three months' modern languages scholarship by Middlesex County Council to pay for me to study abroad. On 26th August I received a telegram from my mother telling me to come home immediately. As a result I was able to get back to

England before the outbreak of war. Two boys Claude Russell and Ron Bradshaw were not so lucky and were stuck in Hamburg at the start of the war and had some difficulty getting back.

Evacuating us to Clacton was a ludicrous decision as it took us closer to Germany and the probability of bombing raids. We left Clacton after a German bomber dropped a landmine and a number of Latymer children had a narrow escape. I remember being billeted with May Munns, Vivienne Martin and Goldie Stretch who went on to become a Froebel teacher. When we took the train to Tonypany we passed within sight of Gloucester Cathedral before arriving at Tonypany. There we were given a fantastic reception although I was told that in fact they were expecting an infants school so a lot of families ended up with much bigger children than they expected. The house where Vivienne and I were billeted, were expecting two infants and they went out the next morning and bought a proper bed. Despite the fact that my foster mother's sister and her unemployed husband were living with them, they still found room for us and we were made more than welcome. They were the most marvellous, kind hearted people. It was part of being a close and supportive community where the individual and the family were more important than money.

After leaving Latymer I was expected to read for a modern languages degree but this did not happen, partly because, at that time, the only way to get your London University fees paid, was to be accepted in advance by the Institute of Education for a year's training for a post

graduate teaching diploma. Steve Marshall and I married in early 1943 although for some fifteen months we were separated as I was conscripted into the ATS. My husband though, had been a member of the Peace Pledge Union⁶ in the 1930s and was given full exemption as a conscientious objector.

NOTES

1. The Borough of Edmonton disappeared in 1963 with the abolition of Middlesex and the creation of the London Borough of Enfield under the umbrella of the Greater London Council.
2. Harry Griffin taught German at Latymer from 1930 to 1967 and died in 1994.
3. Doris Jeffries "Jeff" was appointed in 1917 to teach mathematics, became bursar in 1919 and served for 41 years
4. Steve Marshall taught physics at Latymer from 1937 to 1940 before going into educational administration and then becoming a grammar school headmaster first in Derbyshire and then Nottinghamshire. He died in 1957.
5. Valerie Abley taught maths from 1936 to 1946.
6. The Peace Pledge Union was founded in 1934 and by 1936 had 100,000 members. Young men were encouraged to send a postcard to Canon Dick Shepherd of St Martins-in-the Fields pledging themselves to renounce war. At least one other member of staff at Latymer 'took the pledge'.



Senior Master Jimmy North with the 1915 soccer side. It was very much due to his efforts that Latymer became a soccer school rather than playing rugby in imitation of the public schools



Programme

OF THE

Opening of the



LATYMER SECONDARY SCHOOL, EDMONTON,

... BY ...

County Alderman Colonel BOWLES, J.P., M.A.
(Chairman of the Middlesex Education Committee),

On SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24th, 1910, at Four o'clock p.m.



Description of the Edmonton Latymer School.

THE site upon which the new buildings stand is situate in Hazelbury Road, Edmonton, and is six acres in extent, the cost of which was £1,500.

A large portion of the site surrounding the buildings is tar paved for the purpose of exercise and drill, while the remaining portion of nearly five acres will be used as playing fields.

The building has been designed to meet the requirements of a County Secondary School for Boys and Girls, and the following accommodation is provided, viz. :—

A large Assembly Hall which will accommodate 500 persons, and will also be used for Art and Gymnastics.

Six Classrooms to accommodate 150 scholars.

Science Room.

Balance Room.

Manual Training Room.

Principal's Room.

Rooms for the Staff.

Cycle Stores.

Cloak Rooms, Lavatories, and Changing Rooms for both sexes.

A Caretaker's House is provided on the site.

The buildings are of local bricks with Monks Park Stone facings.

The roof is covered with Brosley tiles, unsorted as to colour.

The lighting is by inverted incandescent gas burners.

The drainage is on the dual system, and the sanitary arrangements are of the most up-to-date character, and in accordance with the Bye-Laws of the Urban District Council.

The work has been carried out by Messrs. W. Lawrence & Son, of Finsbury Circus, E.C., at a contract price of £6,782, from plans prepared by, and under the supervision of Mr. H. G. Crothall, Architect to the Middlesex Education Committee.

B. S. GOTT,
Secretary of the Middlesex Education Committee.

The programme for the opening of the new Latymer building in Hazelbury Road. The term Latymer Secondary School is significant since Middlesex was determined that the new school would have the same status as the other county schools under its jurisdiction.